

Barrett Adolescent Centre Specific Purpose School

School Review Report





Contents

1. Introduction	3
1.1 Review team.....	3
1.2 School context.....	4
1.3 Contributing stakeholders	5
1.4 Supporting documentary evidence.....	5
2. Executive summary.....	6
2.1 Key findings.....	6
2.2 Key improvement strategies	8
3. Snapshot of previous school review	9
4. Findings and improvement strategies against the domains	10
4.1 An explicit improvement agenda.....	10
4.2 Analysis and discussion of data.....	12
4.3 A culture that promotes learning	14
4.4 Targeted use of school resources.....	16
4.5 An expert teaching team.....	18
4.6 Systematic curriculum delivery	20
4.7 Differentiated teaching and learning	22
4.8 Effective pedagogical practices	25
4.9 School-community partnerships.....	27



1. Introduction

This report is a product of a review carried out by a review team from the School Improvement Unit (SIU) at **Barrett Adolescent Centre Specific Purpose School** from **12 to 15 March 2019**

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 implement in consultation with its regional office and school community.

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

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.

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

1.1 Review team

Jenny Maier	Senior reviewer, SIU (review chair)
Jenny Hart	Senior reviewer
David Manttan	External reviewer



1.2 School context

Location:	Lofter Street, Tennyson
Education region:	Metropolitan Region
Year opened:	1983 – Wacol in original form 2014 – Yeronga as independent from Queensland Health 2015 – at Tennyson Special School 2017 – on campus of Queensland Pathways State College, Tennyson
Year levels:	Year 7 to Year 12
Enrolment:	28 – currently
Indigenous enrolment percentage:	0.0 per cent of students currently identify as Indigenous.
Students with disability enrolment percentage:	100 per cent of students access professional mental health support
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	n/a
Year principal appointed:	2013 – Term 2 2014 (acting principal); continuing throughout 2014–2019
Day 8 Staffing teacher full-time equivalent numbers:	6.4
Significant partner schools:	Queensland Children's Hospital (QCH) School, Yeronga State High School, Forest Lake State High School, Indooroopilly State High School, Corinda State High School, Ipswich State High School, Brisbane State High School, Coorparoo Secondary College, Bellbird Park State Secondary College, Centenary State High School, Brisbane School of Distance Education (SDE), Cairns SDE, Capricorn SDE.
Significant community partnerships:	Child and Youth Mental Health Service (CYMHS), Assertive Mobile Youth Outreach Service (AMYOS), Evolve, private mental health providers, Anglicare, Aftercare, Mercy Care, Safe Places, local businesses, Queensland Ambulance, Queensland Police Service (QPS), Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors, and Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women.
Significant school programs:	A fully differentiated curriculum delivery that offers each student engagement with the Australian Curriculum (AC) through the general capabilities and allows students to access their base school curriculum which is also aligned to the AC



1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following stakeholders contributed to the review:

School community:

- Principal, curriculum coordinator, six teachers, two teacher aides, six students, president Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) and nine parents/carers.

Community and business groups:

- Six clinical providers and Mental Health Community Advocate.

Partner schools and other educational providers:

- Principal Ipswich State High School, principal QCH School, head of student services Indooroopilly State High School, senior guidance officer and three guidance officers.

Government and departmental representatives:

- ARD.

1.4 Supporting documentary evidence

Annual Implementation Plan 2019	School Data Profile (Semester 2, 2018)
Investing for Success 2019	School budget overview
School Opinion Survey	Curriculum planning documents
OneSchool information	School differentiation plan
Professional learning plan 2019	Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students
Staff Induction Program	Referral and enrolment documents
School pedagogical framework	Professional development plans
School data plan	School newsletters and website
Classroom Readiness Project document	School based curriculum, assessment and reporting framework
Various student planning documents including Individual Learning Plans and Individual Support Plans	Barrett Adolescent School Improvement Action Plan 2016 and 2017 - 2019



2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

The belief that every student can learn pervades the school.

All staff are committed to doing whatever it takes to support each young person in their learning and personal development. There is a sense of belonging and connection for all.

School leaders and staff are to be acknowledged for the considerable progress made in response to the 2015 school review in relation to understanding and implementing the Australian Curriculum (AC).

The principal and school staff have developed an improvement agenda underpinned by the school's vision. The principal is leading the way in driving and implementing this agenda. It identifies two broad focus areas including continuing to build mental health management and knowledge, and further developing and refining Australian Curriculum (AC) delivery in order to provide educational opportunities for adolescents experiencing mental health issues.

The collection of student performance data is prioritised by school leaders to determine the areas for further student development in literacy, numeracy and social and personal development.

Diagnostic data and observations inform the completion of personal and social capability continua in addition to the school-developed classroom readiness indicators. Recently introduced diagnostic testing is being implemented. Each student's case manager records and analyses this data. School leaders report this is an area of continual development.

The leadership team and all staff members are clear and consistent with regard to placing a priority on ensuring that all teaching and learning addresses the individual needs of every student.

Staff articulate that there are many plans developed for an individual student. They acknowledge the difference in plans and the different purpose and audience of plans. Staff are seeking a way to streamline plans to avoid the duplication of information.

The school has a documented whole-school curriculum plan based on the AC, Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) and Vocational Education and Training (VET).

Students access a combination of subjects, some generated through the school and others provided and assessed through their base school. Senior students study curriculum from their base school and through Schools of Distance Education (SDE) and Queensland Pathways State College (QPSC). Teaching staff tutor students in English and mathematics and other subject programs provided by the student's base school. Assessment tasks are undertaken at Barrett and returned to the base school for marking and moderation. Teachers express interest in further developing their curriculum knowledge through professional learning, particularly in relation to the new senior syllabuses.



School leaders and staff recognise that the effective use of teaching strategies is key to engaging students in successful learning.

Teachers are frequently in team teaching situations with teaching colleagues and teacher aides. They articulate this situation provides opportunities for collaborative conversations regarding their pedagogical practices. These conversations occur informally between colleagues and more formally in staff meetings and case management processes. A formal observation and feedback process is yet to be developed and implemented in the school.

All staff members articulate and demonstrate a belief that all students can be successful in learning when staff understand their current wellbeing needs and achievement levels.

The school has established effective partnerships with mental health providers to support students whilst attending the school. Feedback regarding student wellbeing and progress at school is shared weekly. Health providers are appreciative of the constant open communication that enables further enhancement and refining of the student's clinical care program.

The school actively seeks strategic partnerships to enhance student learning and wellbeing with parents, base schools, community groups, local businesses and other schools and post-secondary education providers.

Parents are highly supportive of the school. Many parents communicate stories of the significant positive changes made in the lives of their child through attending the school. Parents express appreciation for the honesty and openness in the communication with the school. Consistent messages articulated by parents regarding their child coming to this school include that it is has been a 'life-saving decision', 'My child's education has been restarted' and 'My child can identify a pathway for learning'.



2.2 Key improvement strategies

Intentionally collaborate with a range of secondary schooling providers to facilitate professional learning that enhances the skills and knowledge of teachers in teaching and assessing the AC Years 7 to 10 and the new senior curriculum.

Provide opportunities for staff to work collaboratively in streamlining the number and range of student plans required for different purposes and audiences.

Further build staff capability to analyse, interpret and purposefully use student learning data to set next steps for learning at individual and student cluster level.

Collaboratively develop and implement an observation and feedback process to support teacher growth in agreed pedagogical practices.



3. Snapshot of previous school review

The last review carried out at the school was conducted from **4 to 8 September 2015**. At the time of the 2015 review the school enrolment was identified as 17 with a student with disability enrolment of 29 per cent.

The key improvement strategies recommended in the review are listed below.

- Engage with regional personnel to undertake a workplace health, safety and wellbeing audit.
- Develop an Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA) which provides a narrow and sharp focus accompanied by clear targets and timelines.
- Continue to access regional support to redevelop the whole-school curriculum plan and provide a clear context for delivering the individualised curriculum, giving priority to literacy and numeracy which is reflective of the students' curriculum program in their base school.
- Ensure curriculum delivery, professional learning and staff roles and responsibilities are clearly aligned to the EIA.
- Work with regional personnel to explore local opportunities which provide access to on-call mental health staff to address the emergency mental health issues of students.



4. Findings and improvement strategies against the domains

4.1 An explicit improvement agenda

Findings

The principal and school staff have developed an improvement agenda underpinned by the school's vision *'To lead excellence in teaching and learning through evidence-based practices that value relationships, resilience, re-engagement and inclusion'*.

The school lives and breathes its mission which is to *'bring a strengths-based relational approach and a positive environment to support differentiated education'* and *'Barrett oversees young people re-engage with peer groups, school settings and future planning for their education or vocation'*.

The improvement agenda is captured in the school's Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) 2019 that reflects state, departmental and regional priorities. The principal is leading the way in driving and implementing this agenda. It identifies two broad focus areas including continuing to build mental health management and knowledge and further developing and refining AC delivery in order to provide educational opportunities for adolescents with mental health issues. Strategies, actions, targets and timelines related to staff actions are stated in the plan. A clear and deliberate strategic planning process that identifies sharp and narrow priorities along with targets and timelines for measuring student progress is yet to be implemented.

School leaders and staff are united in their moral purpose to build the personal and social capacity of individual students in order to prepare them for return to mainstream education or senior pathways. Staff report their goal is to transition 100 per cent of students back into mainstream schooling or another senior pathway.

Staff articulate the importance of building trusting productive relationships with students in order to re-engage them in education and build their resilience. To this end the curriculum centres around personal and social wellbeing in conjunction with the AC learning areas, general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities. Curriculum is flexible and responsive to the individual needs of each student. The classroom readiness continuum has been developed to track student progress towards the ultimate goal of transition to mainstream schooling or alternative educational pathway.

The school seeks to understand student achievement from pre-enrolment to exit and a comprehensive referral and enrolment process is established to ensure optimal placement and programming for each student. A systematic process for the ongoing monitoring and reporting of the progress of each student is established. Weekly complex case management meetings and weekly written reports to staff, base school liaison staff, parents, guidance officers and allied professional support providers keep all stakeholders informed. Complex case review meetings cover case management information, academic progress, classroom readiness, transition options and future actions.



School leaders and staff are to be acknowledged for the considerable progress they have made in response to the 2015 school review in relation to understanding and implementing the AC.

Improvement strategies

Strengthen leadership capability and knowledge regarding instructional leadership and strategic planning processes.



4.2 Analysis and discussion of data

Findings

The collection of student performance data is prioritised by school leaders to determine the areas for further student development in literacy, numeracy and social and personal development.

The school's schedule for collection of data identifies what data is to be collected and at what points in the students' engagement with the school. A schedule is established from enrolment through to exit from the school and includes a schedule for daily, weekly, end of term, semester and year collections.

Data tools utilised include the diagnostic PAT-R, PAT-SPG and PAT-M testing in addition to the observations required for completion of the personal and social capability continua and the school-developed classroom readiness indicators. The recently introduced PAT diagnostic testing is being implemented. Each student's case manager records and analyses this data. School leaders report this is an area of continual development.

Student literacy and numeracy data is mapped to the literacy and numeracy continua to determine the next steps for learning for students. Students are clustered by similar learning needs within their classes with this data used to direct teaching within each student's individual learning plans. This data is used for all students from Year 7 to Year 12. In the junior school planning, teachers use the data to directly teach areas of need whilst in the senior school, teachers use the data for informal individual student interventions within units planned by their base school.

Student achievement is individually tracked to show progress in their learning using the literacy and numeracy continua. Data from this tracking is stored on OneSchool so that the student's base school can be informed of the progress being made in this special purpose school.

As students enter the school they are observed by teachers, guidance officers and other staff members to have their personal and social capabilities mapped on the personal and social capabilities learning continuum and the classroom readiness continuum. Data from this process is moderated by staff members in the regular weekly case management meetings. As students progress their capability continua are updated to continually monitor student development and to plan the next steps in social and personal learning for each student.

Literacy and numeracy data in conjunction with social and personal and classroom readiness data is displayed on a data wall in the staffroom. Regular discussion of this data influences the learning program of all students on a weekly basis.

The principal emails a report each week to every student's stakeholder group to ensure open and accurate information regarding student progress is constantly shared. Base school contacts and parents appreciate this timely and comprehensive information regarding their student/child.



Student attendance and absence data is collected daily and analysed regularly. Students follow differentiated attendance schedules, and the school collects data to enable comparison to the expected schedules. This process has enabled more accurate tracking of student attendance data against expected attendance.

There is constant monitoring of student progress through formative assessment processes. Summative assessment tasks are supplied by the student's base school and whilst the assessment is undertaken in the special purpose school, the completed assessment is returned to the base school for marking and moderation with the student's cohort. Teachers at the Barrett Adolescent Special Purpose School are informed of the assessment outcome and the data is stored and reported upon by the base school.

All students who are exiting the school as Year 12 students work towards achieving a QCE through their base high school, QPSC, or other alternate provider. Currently all Year 12 students are on track to achieve a QCE.

Improvement strategies

Further build staff capability to analyse, interpret and purposefully use student learning data to set next steps for learning at individual and student cluster level.



4.3 A culture that promotes learning

Findings

The belief that every student can learn pervades the school. All staff are committed to doing whatever it takes to support each young person in their learning and personal development. There is a sense of belonging and connection for all.

High expectations are articulated for students in terms of attendance, engagement with learning and outcomes. To support this, the school provides 'wrap around' support for each student that is highly individualised according to their needs. A comprehensive case management process is embedded.

Students and parents acknowledge the high level of support provided by staff as students develop their future pathway and prepare to transition into mainstream education.

Parents report the school is inclusive, caring and respectful. They are highly complementary of the service provided and the improvements they have seen in their child as a result of the work of the school in reconnecting their child with learning. Parents and carers describe the staff at the school using words such as 'lifesavers' and 'miracle workers'.

Teachers are knowledgeable in the areas of trauma-informed practice and working with students with diagnosed mental health illness and willingly participate in Professional Development (PD) to remain current with latest research and strategies. Relational teaching is viewed as important to building trust and reducing the barriers to successful learning. Flexibility and responsiveness are hallmarks of the approach to teaching and learning at the school.

Staff have opportunities to participate in research visits to similar schools, in the state and nation, to further reflect on ways of working and service delivery and to continue to build a culture for learning in this special purpose school.

Social capability is developed through integrated curriculum units and the school strives to find the appropriate balance between the areas of personal and social capability and formal curriculum. Student wellbeing is addressed within health and wellbeing classes and across all areas of the curriculum.

The school curriculum promotes inquiry, innovation, creativity, and independent learning through timetabled Critical and Creative Thinking Universal Skills (CACTUS) lessons.

The school has a documented Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students (RBPS), Student Handbook and Staff Induction Handbook that outline expectations, policies and processes for day-to-day operations at the school.

The grounds and classrooms present a positive and caring environment that is designed to be welcoming and engaging for students. Curriculum delivery occurs within classrooms. The school takes advantage of the outdoor facilities and special interest skills and knowledge of staff to deliver the curriculum.



Staff wellbeing is a priority in this complex workplace and a wellbeing plan is developed. Staff are encouraged to be involved in whole-staff social activities in addition to a range of activities that address physical and emotional wellbeing.

Individual case management is extensive and includes activities including outreach visits by staff, an induction program for incoming students, support in work placements and Technical and Further Education (TAFE), public transport training for students, and communication with base school and other support providers.

Students have a strong sense of trust in the staff of the school. They articulate the strong relationship they have with their teachers and care managers who support their wellbeing and engagement in learning.

Students are appreciative of the voice they have in their learning programs and in the support they require. Students appreciate staff understanding of their own personal health and wellbeing needs and appreciate and value the individual accommodations and responses to their needs. They articulate that having this support when required allows them to successfully engage in learning.

Student meetings are held every two weeks. Students are encouraged to voice opinions and concerns regarding the school, aspects of their learning and areas of identified personal need.

Students are able to discuss the individual feedback and support they receive from staff at the school and their base school that supports and informs their learning.

Students express that their academic results, whilst enrolled at this school, are the best they have ever achieved.

The attendance of every student is recorded every day. Parent–school contact is part of the absence follow-up process and support is provided to encourage the student to maintain their engagement.

The School Opinion Survey (SOS) 2018 regarding staff, parent and student satisfaction reveals a high level of satisfaction for all three groups. The overall satisfaction rating for all survey items is 96.8 per cent for staff, 99.7 per cent for parents and 90.1 per cent for students. In response to the statement 'This is a good school', 100.0 per cent of staff and parents agree with 92.9 per cent of students agreeing.

Improvement strategies

Research state, national and international provision for students with mental health needs to continually refine practice.

4.4 Targeted use of school resources

Findings

The school has developed processes to identify and respond to each individual student that allow for flexible responses in the allocation of staff and resources. All students have highly individualised learning programs that specify their learning program and resources required to achieve transition goals.

Staff members have developed expertise in teaching students with complex mental health needs. Some staff have expertise in a range of curriculum and extracurricular areas. Program offerings include horticulture, visual arts, drama and Indigenous education. These programs and curriculum offerings are occasionally provided through integrated studies. Staff with these identified skill sets are utilised flexibly in the school to meet identified student needs.

A school-wide approach is apparent in the teaching of personal and social capabilities and health and wellbeing to this cohort of adolescent students. Staff are able to articulate the research behind the importance of this work to the ongoing wellbeing needs of students.

The school has worked with the region to modify and upgrade facilities that provide a safe and supportive environment. The Business Manager (BM) discusses the importance of occupational health and safety audits for this environment. Documents and procedures that support this focus are on display throughout the school.

The school facilities are attached and aligned to QPSC and as such all facility matters including grounds and cleaning are managed by QPSC. The principal and BM articulate that a successful partnership has been built with the school to support these operational needs.

The BM works with the principal to develop and operationalise the school budget. Regular meetings occur to review and adjust the budget as required. A review of the Budget Overview Report (BOR) confirms that cost centres and budget allocations align with school priorities. Appropriate budget allocations are provided to support curriculum, student learning programs and staff professional needs. The current bank balance is \$79 723.

The school is supported by the BM and an administration officer. The BM has built working relationships with regional finance and Human Resource (HR) personnel to provide advice and support to the school as required. The administration officer provides daily support to teachers and students, manages absence procedures in consultation with students' case managers, and types up reports from case management notes to inform the weekly emailed update report sent to stakeholders.

Office staff attend regional training and professional learning opportunities provided by the region.

The school received \$5 362 under the Investing for Success (I4S) initiative. The school has identified that these funds support staff PD, implementation of the AC and differentiated learning for students. These identified areas of need and improvement align to the school's priorities.



All staff members articulate difficulties with current Information and Communication Technology (ICT) infrastructure in the school. The leadership team articulates that cabling and WiFi access is dated and requires upgrading. Internet 'drop outs' are cited by staff as a cause of frustration. They articulate that reliable access to technology to link with base schools and other educational and health providers is vital to their daily work. The school has partnered with a nearby state high school to access an ICT technician to support the maintenance of ICT infrastructure and resources. The BM states that the school server is due for replacement and that budget provisions are allocated for this purpose.

Improvement strategies

Develop an ICT plan to address the upgrading, replacement and purchase of ICTs to support the learning needs of students, professional work of staff and operational needs of the school.



4.5 An expert teaching team

Findings

The school has strong processes and procedures to share responsibility for student learning and success and to encourage professional improvement through classroom-based learning, mentoring and selected PD.

Induction processes for new teaching and support staff are documented. Teachers appointed to the school are supported by a mentor to assist them in learning the procedures and policies of the school. The mentor assists with understanding the needs of assigned students and helps to unpack the individual student's data profile and the learning program. Teachers express their appreciation for this process that enables them to successfully address the learning needs of students.

All staff members undertake the Annual Performance Development Plan (APDP) process with their supervisor. Their planned access to professional learning and improvement supports their capability development enabling confidence in addressing the social and personal learning needs of students.

A PD plan is established for 2019 and is planned on a term basis. The plan addresses the school priority areas and identifies activities for the whole staff and individual teachers. Teachers new to the school are encouraged to undertake PD in mental health first aid and complex trauma management to enhance their skills in working with students in the school. Teachers receive support from colleagues in developing teaching strategies aligned to the school's pedagogical framework.

Specialists in a range of mental health management strategies are invited to work with staff members to develop their skills and capabilities to work with the diverse range of students.

Parents express their confidence that staff have developed the capabilities to engage their child in social and personal learning that builds their confidence to attend school and engage in the learning programs.

The principal is a member of the Unique Schools Cluster that includes Milpera State High School, QPSC, Brisbane Youth Education and Training Centre, and the Queensland Children's Hospital (QCH) School. In addition to meeting with cluster principals, the principal is mentored by the executive principal of the QCH School. The principal acknowledges the need to continue with mentoring and coaching opportunities in strategic and instructional leadership.

Teachers are mentored and coached in their role of case manager by school leaders and colleagues. Through the regular case management meetings for each student, teachers are supported and challenged to manage the services and supports for their students. This collaborative approach allows all staff members to be informed and confident with the learning approaches and actions to be taken so that student confidence and learning is developed.



Staff members are supported by colleagues and school leaders, and there is open discussion regarding teaching and support strategies. Formalised coaching arrangements that provide continuous professional improvement in teaching capabilities for all staff are yet to be developed.

School leaders have established a culture of collaboration and teamwork with teaching and support staff that is enhanced by collaboration with clinicians and professional staff in other organisations including schools, mental health service providers and businesses. Parents indicate their support of this culture that is benefiting their students.

Teaching staff members tutor students in English and mathematics and other subject programs provided by the student's base school. Assessment tasks are undertaken at Barrett and returned to the base school for marking and moderation. PD to enhance the skills of staff members in the delivery of the junior and senior curriculum and in the marking and moderation of student work is yet to occur.

Improvement strategies

Intentionally collaborate with a range of secondary providers to facilitate professional learning that enhances the skills and knowledge of teachers in teaching and assessing the curriculum.

Develop procedures and processes for effective classroom-based coaching for all staff.



4.6 Systematic curriculum delivery

Findings

The school has a documented whole-school curriculum plan that describes the three levels of curriculum planning based on the AC, QCE and VET. Students access a combination of subjects, some generated through the school and others provided and assessed through their base school.

The school strives to ensure every student has access to a classroom setting and opportunities to develop their skills in working with others. In addition to English and mathematics the school offers integrated AC learning areas with attention directed to the relevant general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities.

The school strives to achieve balance between developing social and personal capabilities and the academic needs and progress of each student.

Students study individually the AC or QCE units of work provided by their base school. English and mathematics are the focus subjects. Some students study additional subjects depending on their readiness. Students are supported by teachers who liaise with the base school to keep them informed of the student's progress in the lessons. Assessment is created, marked and moderated by the base school with some limited involvement of Barrett teachers in this process.

Many students come with high levels of disengagement from mainstream learning that may result in significant learning gaps particularly in literacy and numeracy. As a result, an English and mathematics program, developed by the school, is provided to junior students in the early weeks of their enrolment. The classes focus on elements of reading, writing and numeracy as identified through a series of PAT diagnostic testing. English lessons are informed by and differentiated according to the PAT comprehension checklist that is mapped against the literacy continuum. Work has commenced to build teachers' understanding of the numeracy continuum and mapping it to the PAT-M standards. Additionally, teacher observation is used widely to formatively assess progress. Senior students may participate in these lessons on a needs basis.

School-based subjects including CACTUS; integrated studies – drawn from History and Social Science (HASS), science, design and technology; Health and Physical Education (HPE); visual art and drama are timetabled throughout the week. These lessons are designed to introduce some of the elements from the range of AC learning areas to minimise gaps in learning when students return to mainstream schooling. Class activities are frequently practical and there are many useful artefacts across the school that are the product of the students' work in the curriculum.

A school-developed health and wellbeing subject is timetabled each week, based on the personal and social capabilities. This subject draws from the HPE curriculum. The classroom readiness continuum and Personal and Social Capabilities (PSC) continuum are used to measure progress. Students have goals based on the PSC continuum. Progress is



measured by teacher observation of student behaviours and mapped onto the student's individual classroom readiness continuum.

Senior students study curriculum from their base school and through SDEs and QPSC. They undertake English and mathematics at a level appropriate to their learning needs. This may be Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA) registered subjects, such as Pre-vocational mathematics and English communication, or Certificate II in Functional Skills and Knowledge (FSK). Some students undertake higher level senior subjects as appropriate to their learning needs. SDEs are usually the providers for these subjects. Individual studies lessons are timetabled each day and are facilitated by the teachers. Students work individually on their curriculum units. Two-way communication between teachers and base school staff is well developed and effective in supporting student learning.

Teachers express interest in further developing their curriculum knowledge through professional learning, particularly in relation to the new senior syllabuses that will be adopted in 2020.

The key focus is on classroom readiness, preparing each student for their return to mainstream schooling. The school is engaged in a classroom readiness action research project to develop a set of measures to inform teaching and learning for students who are disengaged from schooling due to the experience of mental illness. Reporting of progress in this program occurs to the case manager and parents via weekly emails and focuses primarily on the student's engagement.

Transition to mainstream schooling is heavily scaffolded and supported. A flexible and responsive approach is taken, and wrap around care is provided until the transition is deemed successful. The school maintains a connection with the family throughout the transition process and beyond.

Improvement strategies

Support teachers to build knowledge and understanding of new senior curriculum in order to support the learning of senior students.

Explore professional learning options for all teachers to develop deeper understanding of the AC and assessment to enhance their capacity to effectively support students.

Develop opportunities for small group instruction within the independent studies lessons where the curriculum being studied is common.



4.7 Differentiated teaching and learning

Findings

The leadership team and all staff members are clear and consistent with regards to placing a priority on ensuring that all teaching and learning addresses the individual needs of every student.

Differentiation begins at the time of referral and placement with a case manager. Relevant student data and information from a range of sources is used to commence the development of a Student Support Plan (SSP). This plan is developed and completed by key stakeholders on entry to summarise the presenting student's mental health needs and educational implications. Part two of the plan documents goals and strategies identified for the student to engage with at the school and the student's base school. The plan documents the case management processes that will be utilised to communicate, monitor and review the plan.

All staff articulate and demonstrate a belief that all students can be successful in learning when staff understand the students' current wellbeing needs and achievement levels. Staff ensure that appropriate curriculum and learning experiences are provided to successfully engage students in learning.

Diagnostic data and data available from base schools, other educational providers and health providers is utilised by the school to understand where students are at in their learning. Emphasis is placed on identifying learning gaps that may be a barrier to learning success.

An Individual Learning Plan (ILP) is developed for each student. This plan builds on the information from the SSP. The ILP focuses on the educational goals and curriculum and the learning programs the student will be participating in. The plan details who is responsible for the curriculum planning and delivery. This document makes clear the responsibilities of the school and base school for student learning. Diagnostic and relevant achievement data is summarised to inform planning.

A student plan is developed on OneSchool as the housing document for all plans and includes summary of curriculum access, support provisions, complex case plans and reviews, plus attached weekly communication, future pathways plan, risk management, ILP and community engagement.

Staff articulate that there are many plans developed for an individual student. They acknowledge the difference in plans and the different purpose and audience of plans. Staff are seeking a way to streamline plans to avoid the duplication of information.

The school has some documentation that provides an explanation of what differentiation is and how it is used and planned for at the school. The school references the Tomlinson¹ model of differentiation as school-wide expected practice. Teachers are able to articulate

¹ Tomlinson, C. A. (2014). *The differentiated classroom: Responding to the needs of all learners*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD).



how they differentiate content and pedagogy to suit student readiness and engagement in learning.

Units of work are developed and differentiated to provide opportunities for students to engage in learning that will address gaps and misunderstandings. School data identifies clusters of students who require particular skill development. Most teachers are able to describe how they use data to inform their differentiation for small group instruction.

No presently enrolled student is on an Individual Curriculum Plan (ICP). Staff are able to discuss previous students who required an ICP and are aware of departmental requirements for ICPs.

Many enrolled students have a background of high academic achievement prior to becoming unwell and disengaging from school. The school partners with SDEs to enable these students to access more academic subjects that may lead to tertiary pathways. Guidance officers support career and pathways planning.

Regular scheduled case management occurs for students. Teachers provide weekly updates regarding student engagement and learning progress. Parents and stakeholders receive these updates. Teachers are able to discuss how students are tracked and monitored using a range of school-based and diagnostic tools. Templates are developed to document case management reviews.

Parents articulate their ongoing involvement in the learning programs delivered to their child. They express appreciation for, and value, the weekly updates regarding their child's progress. Parents and stakeholders are viewed as partners in student planning and learning. Teachers are constantly discussing, reviewing and adjusting curriculum and programs in response to the progress of individual students.

Teachers acknowledge the importance of having students involved in planning appropriate curriculum and learning pathways. Students participate in planning and reviews as appropriate and know the goals of their plan and pathway.

Students may attend the school for four days a week. Fridays are used by staff to liaise with inter-agencies, base schools, other educational providers and work experience providers. This day allows staff to visit other sites where students may or may not be attending on a Friday. In addition, this day provides a chance for some students to attend the school while no other students are on site and this is used as a strategy to support enhanced engagement over time. The school schedules periodic parent learning and information sessions on these days. Staff articulate that some students require a shortened week to maintain and sustain engagement.

Improvement strategies

Provide opportunities for staff members to work collaboratively in streamlining the number and range of student plans required for different purposes and audiences.



Ensure that students can access their full entitlement to education as their health and wellbeing status allows, in order to support successful full-time transition to the next step in their learning pathway.

4.8 Effective pedagogical practices

Findings

School leaders and staff members recognise that the effective use of teaching strategies is key to engaging students in successful learning.

School leaders keep informed of research and effective best practice strategies to support the engagement and learning of students with complex mental health needs. Staff members share relevant research and attend relevant PD.

A pedagogical framework is developed that places mental health and personal and social capabilities as the overarching tenets. Productive pedagogies and explicit teaching – Fisher and Frey² are the key pedagogies used in the school. The framework additionally references differentiation, curriculum intent, assessment, collaborative partnerships and complex case management.

Productive Pedagogies – Hayes et al³, references connectedness, recognition of difference, supportive classroom environment and intellectual quality. Teachers discuss their teaching practice in ways that make clear that these ways of working are common features of their practice. Teachers are able to discuss these practices as the values and beliefs that underpin their thinking when planning and delivering curriculum.

Explicit teaching is used in individual and small group instruction. Teachers are able to discuss how learning is scaffolded to provide multiple opportunities to practise skills in a safe environment. Teachers articulate the Gradual Release of Responsibility (GRR) as fundamental to their practice, and that the ultimate goal is to develop skills in students to successfully transition back into a classroom. Teachers focus on the delivery of instruction through an 'I do, We do, You do it together' and 'You do it alone' approach.

A document *Characteristics of and strategies for students with Mental Illness* provides teachers with considerations and strategies to engage students. Teachers describe how these types of considerations and strategies are discussed as ways of working and supporting students to successfully engage in learning. Case conferences and support plans reference these strategies.

Teachers discuss how their professional learning in trauma-informed practices has impacted on their teaching and how this is particularly relevant to many students in the school.

Teachers can discuss how the pedagogical practices of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and Yarning Circles are emerging in the school. The pedagogical framework is yet to be a succinct document encompassing all agreed ways of working.

² Fisher, D., & Frey, N. (2008). *Better learning through structured teaching: A framework for the gradual release of responsibility*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development (ASCD)

³ Hayes, D., Mills, M., Christie, P., & Lingard, B. (2006). *Teachers and schooling making a difference: Productive pedagogies, assessment and performance*. Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin.



A teacher in the school is leading an action research project to develop a set of measures and goals to inform teaching and learning for students who are disengaged from schooling due to experience of mental illness. The project and its phases are documented and shared with staff and community. The project booklet contains all phases and reviews of the project and includes a literature review.

Teachers are able to discuss how the resultant classroom readiness indicators are utilised to support teachers to identify key engagement indicators. These indicators include attendance, self-management, classroom routines, reflective learning and on-task behaviours. Student progress is mapped and teachers can identify and understand what they need to explicitly teach to support students to be classroom ready for successful transition to mainstream schooling. Teachers are able to discuss how this work guides their teaching practices to build successful learners.

Deliberate efforts are taken to create learning environments where students are engaged, challenged, feel safe to take risks and are supported to learn. Teachers articulate that teacher-student relationships are fundamental to student engagement and success.

Teachers discuss how they use the personal and social capabilities to build student belief in their own capabilities and their understanding of the relationship between effort and success.

Students articulate the strong relationships they have with staff members. They articulate how teachers provide feedback regarding their personal goals and academic work in regular daily classroom work and scheduled review and feedback sessions.

Teachers are frequently in team teaching situations with teaching colleagues and teacher aides. They articulate this situation provides opportunities for collaborative conversations regarding their pedagogical practices. These conversations occur informally between colleagues and more formally in staff meetings and case management processes. A formal observation and feedback process is yet to be developed and implemented in the school.

Improvement strategies

Collaboratively develop an observation and feedback process to support teacher growth in agreed pedagogical practices.

Review and update the pedagogical framework to ensure it captures all agreed signature pedagogical practices used in the school.

Provide regular dedicated professional learning opportunities for staff to share expertise and practice documented in the pedagogical framework.



4.9 School-community partnerships

Findings

The school actively seeks strategic partnerships to enhance student learning and wellbeing with parents, base schools, community groups, local businesses and other schools and post-secondary education providers. In addition, the partnerships aim to assist families to gain experience and learnings not directly available from the school that enhance their ability to cater for their child. The school's partnerships are intended to be long term and sustainable.

The school establishes a strong partnership with each base school for the duration of a student's placement at Barrett. The focus of these partnerships is two-fold. Firstly, it focuses on building the capacity of staff in the base schools to successfully manage students with mental health needs through guided case management and PD. Secondly, the partnership focuses on continuing the student's academic learning program at the base school through delivery of units of work primarily in English and mathematics, weekly reports on student progress and participation in assessment tasks set by the base school.

Principals and coordinators in base schools indicate their desire to have greater involvement with teachers at Barrett to share expertise in managing student mental health needs. The sharing of skills and strategies with mainstream school staff to minimise risks for students is appreciated.

Transitioning students to a regular school or to post-school options is a key purpose of the school. Partnerships are established with a range of schools to provide a pathway for students in the senior school to continue learning after a transition from the school. Procedures and processes are established to support the transition of students to the next stage of their learning with educational providers including QPSC, Kingston State College, Arethusa College and other mainstream secondary schools.

For those students who are completing secondary schooling, partnerships are established with Griffith University, University of Southern Queensland (USQ) Springfield Campus and Southbank TAFE to enable transition into post-secondary learning.

The school is located in an industrial estate. This has enabled partnering with Ionide, a scientific instrument business, in the provision of work experience and part-time employment for a student as part of the learning program. Other businesses provide financial and in-kind support for the school. A school-based traineeship has been established for a student within a local small business.

Mental health clinical care partnerships with organisations such as Evolve Therapeutic Services Queensland Health, Child and Youth Mental Health Service (CYMHS), Assertive Mobile Youth Outreach Service (AMYOS), Ed-LinQ and other private providers are established to provide support for students whilst attending the school and allow the school to provide regular weekly feedback to the partners regarding student progress in the school. Clinical care practitioners are appreciative of the constant open feedback they receive that enables further enhancement and refining of the student's clinical care program.



Parents are highly supportive of the school. Many parents communicate stories of the significant positive changes made in the lives of their child through attending the school. For many parents these benefits included positive changes to family life, with their child being able to attend school and learn ways of living in a manner that is less life threatening or self-harming. Parents indicate that this school is the final step in a mental health journey that previously was extremely challenging and debilitating for their child and their family.

Parents appreciate the honesty and openness in the communication with the school and the consistency of teaching approaches undertaken by the staff. Consistent messages articulated by parents regarding their child coming to this school include that it is has been a 'life-saving decision', 'My child's education has been restarted' and 'My child can identify a pathway for learning'.

The 2018 SOS indicates that in response to the statements 'This school works with me to support my child's learning', and 'This school takes parents opinions seriously', 100.0 per cent of parents agree.

The school has a small and dedicated Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) of current and past parents. The association supports the work of the school with some fundraising and advice for school leaders.

The school has significant, well established partnerships involving parents, community organisations and businesses. Processes to continually review and update partnerships are yet to be implemented.

Improvement strategies

Establish processes to evaluate the effectiveness and sustainability of partnerships to improve learning outcomes for students.