

# Boyne Island Environmental Education Centre

## Executive Summary





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## 1. Introduction

This report is a product of a review carried out by a review team from School and Region Reviews (SRR) at **Boyne Island Environmental Education Centre** from **13 to 14 October 2022**.

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 SRR and reviews for Queensland state schools please visit the SRR [website](#).

### 1.1 Review team

Bradley Clark	Internal reviewer, SRR (review chair)
Sue Gibson	Peer reviewer
David Hinton	External reviewer



## 1.2 School context

<b>Indigenous land name:</b>	Byellee, Gooreng Gooreng, Gurang, Taribelang Bunda
<b>Location:</b>	Malpas St, Boyne Island
<b>Education region:</b>	Central Queensland
<b>Year levels:</b>	Prep to Year 12 (some tertiary)
<b>Enrolment:</b>	Nil
<b>Indigenous enrolment percentage:</b>	Nil
<b>Students with disability percentage:</b>	Nil
<b>Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:</b>	N/A
<b>Year principal appointed:</b>	2019



### 1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following stakeholders contributed to the review:

School community:

- Principal, Business Manager (BM), three teachers, teacher aide, unit support officer, project officer- Port Curtis Harbour Watch, two cleaners and seven visiting school students.

Community and business groups:

- Gladstone Ports Corporation environmental specialist, senior lecturer CQUniversity (CQUni), Coastal Marine Ecosystems Research Centre director, community specialist Boyne Smelter Limited (BSL), two Queensland Alumina Limited (QAL) community specialists, Friends of Boyne Island Environmental Education Centre (BIEEC) representative, representative of Gladstone Wildlife Carers Association and national data base manager from Tangarora Blue Marine Debris.

Partner schools and other educational providers:

- Principal Thangool State School, teacher Thangool State School, teacher Pine Rivers State High School, Head of Department (HOD) Agnes Waters State School, teacher aide Tannum Sands State High School, teacher Toolooa State High School, teacher Woongarra State School, principal Tannum Sands State School, teacher Tannum Sands State School and principal Gladstone Central State School.

Government and departmental representatives:

- State Member for Gladstone and ARD.

## 2. Executive summary

### 2.1 Key findings

#### **Staff discuss high levels of wellbeing, job satisfaction, and a strong collegial culture.**

Staff members share their appreciation for a culture built on strong relationships, professionalism and mutual respect. High levels of trust are apparent amongst staff. They indicate regularly being acknowledged for their contributions and receiving welcomed feedback. Staff members detail a strong sense of collegiality and unity in their work. They discuss appreciation for the use of consultative and collaborative approaches. Staff outline having high levels of agency, with their opinions, suggestions and input continually valued by the principal and their colleagues. The principal describes a high level of pride in the staff and strong appreciation for their commitment to the centre. Visiting staff describe the culture of the centre as welcoming, authentic and collaborative, detailing high levels of gratitude for the approachability of centre staff.

#### **Centre staff are highly skilled educators.**

A team of enthusiastic and dedicated staff display strong commitment to the development of the centre. Centre staff are highly valued by students and staff from visiting schools. Visiting teachers express appreciation for the centre teachers' expert capacity to provide differentiated learning experiences for students and their focus on ensuring all students are successful in the program. Principals from visiting schools share a belief that the centre has highly skilled practitioners. They have high levels of confidence that their students will be appropriately challenged and engaged during centre visits. Centre partners and visiting staff outline that the centre staff hold high expectations for all learners and themselves.

#### **Using data in making evidence-based, informed decisions is the catalyst for sustained improvement.**

The centre has developed, and is implementing, a comprehensive plan for the systematic collection of a range of student outcome data, including academic, behaviour, attendance and wellbeing. Teachers are trialling a range of quantitative and qualitative data collection tools to measure the impact of teaching and learning on visiting students. The principal articulates a desire to build staff data literacy capability to improve the analysis of student learning data, with a focus on analysing qualitative data.

#### **Student-centred learning is the underpinning pedagogical approach guiding effective teaching practice.**

The principal maintains currency with research in pedagogical fields and is leading a rigorous review of pedagogical approaches that align to the increasing focus on student-centred learning. Other pedagogical approaches, including place-responsive pedagogy<sup>1</sup>,

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<sup>1</sup> Mannion, G., Fenwick, A., & Lynch, J. (2013). *Place-responsive pedagogy: learning from teachers' experiences of excursions in nature*. Environmental Education Research, 19(6), 792 - 809.

Explicit Instruction<sup>2</sup> (EI) and experiential learning<sup>3</sup> are additionally used to support hands-on learning in real-life contexts, utilising the available rich and diverse natural learning environments. Clarity regarding how and when these approaches are used in different contexts to impact teaching and learning is yet to be developed and documented.

**Staff discuss a strong understanding of, and a personal commit to, the Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA) and improving student outcomes.**

The principal outlines the EIA as a focus on three priorities of successful learners through quality curriculum, staff capability and quality pedagogy. The three priorities are detailed in the centre's strategic planning documents, with accompanying success indicators and timelines for the implementation of the strategies. The Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) outlines targets for three-, six-, nine- and 12-month junctures supporting the centre to regularly monitor the enactment of the improvement agenda. Most of the targets focus on expected outcomes of staff actions. A few targets directly related to improved student outcomes are documented. Staff awareness of the key targets is developing. The principal recognises that as comprehensive data analysis systems are introduced regarding student data, more fine-grained targets may be collaboratively developed.

**Staff are highly effective at knowing and meeting the needs of all learners.**

A 'Student Spotlight' template, created by staff, is completed by visiting school staff outlining information regarding learner needs and considerations of attending students. They articulate that this information is highly valued and describe the benefits of having insightful and relevant student information identified. Visiting staff and centre staff outline shared ownership and commitment to supporting the success of all learners. Staff highlight the importance of providing visiting staff with an overview of some of the differentiated and pedagogical practices the centre uses to ensure a cohesive approach to scaffolding the learning experiences. They discuss modifying program offerings, learning spaces, content, lesson pace and pedagogical approaches. Formal recording of the modifications and planned differentiated practices are yet to be systematically documented or shared with visiting schools.

**Staff members are committed to continuous improvement.**

A strategic approach by the principal to driving centre improvement is apparent, with a clear priority of delivering high-quality learning, wellbeing and engagement outcomes for all visiting students. The principal and teaching staff members, clearly and enthusiastically, articulate a collective thirst for continuous improvement in the centre's teaching and learning. Staff articulate strong ownership of, and investment in, a constant cycle of refining practices and approaches to add value beyond the classroom. Significant gains in the three elements of the EIA are apparent, with staff detailing a culture of collective desire for continual

<sup>2</sup> Archer, A. L., & Hughes, C. A. (2011). *Explicit instruction: effective and efficient teaching*. Guilford Press.

<sup>3</sup> Kolb, D. A. (2014). *Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development* (2nd ed.). Pearson FT Press.



improvement. The staff-created vision, values and mission statement effectively detail the expected outcomes and ways of working, with staff taking strong ownership. Staff express high levels of confidence in the strategic direction of the centre.

**The principal has many well-established productive community partnerships.**

A Parent and Community Engagement (PaCE) Framework is documented. The centre has gained a positive reputation within the local region and central Queensland. Many community organisations and businesses speak highly of the centre and the proactive contribution it makes to the wider community. Several significant community business partnerships provide sponsorship for a range of community and student programs. These programs have a high profile within the broader community and provide authentic hands-on learning experiences for students at centre and local schools. Positive links have been fostered with the Gladstone cluster of schools, with the centre supporting the majority of schools in an educational way, either through day visits, camps, access to resources or attending special events.

**The centre's revitalised curriculum plan is aligned to the mission statement.**

Programs available for each year level from Prep to Year 12, specific Australian Curriculum (AC) links, time requirements and what students will be doing and learning during the program, are clearly set out in the curriculum plan. The centre delivers a thoughtfully developed suite of residential camp programs, day visit programs, specialty and invitational camps, citizen science and short courses aligned to the AC Version 8 and senior syllabuses. Curriculum and programs are locally relevant, utilising the natural environment to provide hands-on and real-world learning opportunities. A recent rigorous review of the Boyne Island Environment Education Centre (BIEEC) curriculum plan led by the principal has resulted in refined offerings. These are supported by highly effective teaching and remain true to the centre mission of *'authentic, stimulating, real-world learning experiences, beyond the capacity of the classroom'*. The offerings reflect what the centre is able to deliver to a very high standard with their expert staff and up-to-date resources. Feedback from visiting teachers and principals positively supports the curriculum changes.



## 2.2 Key improvement strategies

Build data literacy for all teaching staff to more effectively collect, analyse and represent purposeful data.

Refine, document and communicate the key pedagogical approaches that guide effective teaching practice.

Collaboratively refine targets prioritising student outcomes to closely monitor the centre's EIA.

In partnership with visiting schools, explore ways to document planned differentiation considerations and adjustments.