

Cairns School of Distance Education

School review executive summary

Every Queensland state school and centre has a review at least once every 4 years to guide continuous improvement and inform strategic priorities. Community feedback is an essential part of the review, with staff, parents, students and the community encouraged to have their say. This executive summary provides an insight into the findings from the school review process.







Acknowledgement of Country

Cairns School of Distance Education acknowledges the shared lands of the Gimuy, Walubara and Yidinji nations.

About the school

Education region	Far North Queensland Region
Year levels	Prep to Year 12
Enrolment	4072 (1882.2 FTE)
Indigenous enrolments	6%
Students with disability	5.7%
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value	1032

About the review

 5 reviewers from 20 to 24 May 2024	 216 participants	 122 school staff
 71 students	 15 parents and carers	 8 community members and stakeholders

Key improvement strategies

<p>Domain 1: Driving an explicit improvement agenda Collaboratively develop and communicate the school vision to cultivate a unified understanding of how the school will meet the educational needs of an increasingly diverse student population.</p> <p>Domain 8: Implementing effective pedagogical practices Collaboratively develop a school-wide vision and expectations for digital learning to support effective teaching practice and student engagement in an online context.</p> <p>Domain 2: Analysing and discussing data Prioritise opportunities for teachers and leaders to collectively analyse and discuss a broader range of data sets to enhance responsive teaching practices and interventions applied by teachers.</p> <p>Domain 7: Differentiating teaching and learning Broaden teachers' understanding of effective differentiation practices in the digital environment, to create accessible, challenging and engaging learning experiences for all students.</p> <p>Domain 6: Leading systematic curriculum implementation Strengthen moderation practices across multiple junctures to increase quality assurance of units and on-balance decision-making, and inform responsive teaching during curriculum delivery.</p>

Key affirmations



Staff members emphasise the strong collegiality that exists between colleagues.

Teachers describe the willingness of colleagues to co-develop and share resources and planning. Staff speak proudly of other staff members providing professional and personal support to ensure success for students. They highlight the positive impact of recent structural changes in the leadership team. Leaders and teachers speak of how this has increased clarity in line management. Staff describe how collaborative approaches to student support are resulting in greater precision in the provision of interventions. Parents express appreciation for teachers and their open communication and commitment to engaging them and home tutors as partners in teaching and learning.



Leaders describe the development of an expert teaching team as integral for improving outcomes for all students.

Leaders indicate they place a high priority on identifying, employing and retaining the best possible teachers and staff for the school, complemented by comprehensive induction and capability development programs. Students and colleagues speak of the high levels of subject discipline expertise across the teaching team. Students and parents acknowledge the work of teachers to meet the learning and wellbeing needs of students. Students comment one of the best things about the school is teachers and the way they help them to learn.



Parents and students commend the flexibility and support offered in the distance education environment to ensure students are successful.

Parents speak highly of the school and the support provided for their child's diverse learning and wellbeing needs. Leaders and teachers positively discuss the school's Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) framework and its implementation in a distance education setting to provide a supportive learning environment. Students and parents describe the many flexible options offered through the School of Distance Education (SDE), including Variable Progression Rates (VPR). Parents and students convey appreciation for the flexibility in curriculum implementation and delivery. They describe how the curriculum is delivered in both synchronous and asynchronous modes, providing greater student agency in managing their learning. They describe how the flexibility offered supports academic achievement, while supporting students to excel in fields outside of education.



Staff convey a commitment to enhancing teaching and learning.

Teachers and leaders describe the many innovative teaching practices that are employed, and how they endeavour to continue exploring responsive approaches to increase student engagement and provide future-orientated pathways for learning. Staff articulate that they know their students, and have an understanding of their learning styles and learning progression. They express a commitment to maximising the learning outcomes of all students. Leaders commend the work of staff in developing innovative resources through QLearn that meet students' diverse learning needs.