Strategic Improvement Plan 2021-2025

Merewether Heights Public School 4416

School vision and context

School vision statement

To be a motivated centre of educational, creative and sporting excellence that enables students and staff to achieve their highest potential.

At Merewether Heights Public School, we believe that:

- Every student should be supported to reach their growth potential;
- Learning best occurs when schools and communities work together;
- Each student should have equal opportunity to a rich, engaging, quality education;
- Positive relationships are essential for students to develop a sense of belonging in the school community;
- All students deserve a high-quality education delivered by well-informed teachers;
- Collaboration among and between teachers, students and parents is essential for enhanced student experiences.

School context

Merewether Heights Public School was established in 1970 and caters for a diverse community of learners. The school is situated on Awabakal land, located approximately 2kms from the beach adjacent to Glenrock nature reserve. The school is part of the Muloobinbah Local AECG and Kotara Community of Schools within the Glenrock Network and is situated within a stable high socio-economic residential area in Newcastle. The school's enrolment was 346 at the commencement of 2021, with 6 students identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and 29 students with a language background other than English.

The school enjoys the support of a very positive and supportive parent community. The community has high expectations of the school; wanting the very best for their children. This desire allows the school and community to work together to provide well-balanced, quality educational experiences to meet the needs of the individual child.

The teacher staff is a mix of experienced and early career teachers who value teamwork and are committed to delivering quality teaching in a nurturing environment. The staff provide quality teaching and learning within inclusive and differentiated learning environments in all aspects of the curriculum. Merewether Heights has a proud tradition of providing quality and highly successful programs in the creative and performing arts, sport and extra curricular activities.

Through our situational analysis, we have identified a need to use data-driven practices that ensure all students have access to stage appropriate learning. Further work will need to occur around how teachers can successfully plan for and deliver quality differentiated instruction to students with additional needs including those identified as high potential and gifted. Through the NAPLAN gap analysis, the school has identified system-negotiated targets areas in reading and numeracy.

Work will take place on developing quality summative and formative assessment tasks and data collection practices and developing greater consistency of judgement within and across the school.

Our work with individual students will be responsive and closely monitored. Individual and targeted support will be provided where growth is not evident. Pre and post assessments will be carried out to assess the impact of this support. Structures will be put in place to identify students who need intervention and students not showing growth will be referred to the Learning and Support Teacher for intensive intervention.

Continual monitoring of student performance data will determine areas of need and success at a class and school level and the involvement of the whole school community in this process will be essential for success.

Strategic Direction 1: Student growth and attainment

Purpose

To maximise the learning outcomes for every student in reading and numeracy, building strong foundations for academic success in every KLA.

Improvement measures

Numeracy growth
Achieve by year: 2023

An increase in Check-in Assessment mean scaled score for numeracy in Year 3 and 5 for 2023 compared with Year 3 and 5 in 2022.

Reading growth
Achieve by year: 2023

An increase in Check-in Assessment mean scaled score for reading in Year 3 and 5 for 2023 compared with Year 3 and 5 in 2022.

Achieve by year: 2025

The school self-assessment against the SEF in the Student Performance Measures theme of Value-add is Excelling.

Initiatives

Data-Driven Practices

Data-driven teaching practices that are responsive to student learning needs will underpin quality instruction to build strong foundations for academic success in every KLA.

- High impact professional learning in data literacy for all staff.
- Learning and Support Teachers, Assistant Principals and aspirant leaders work with teachers, using data to monitor and assess student progress and design future learning on a whole class, group and individual level.
- Strong internal assessment practices are established to allow professional development responsive to student need.
- A clear and succinct assessment schedule for each stage is in place to support whole school priorities.

Differentiation, Intervention and Extension

Teachers and school staff work collaboratively to identify and respond to the additional learning and support needs of students to maximise their learning outcomes. Student strengths, needs, skills and interests are integral in the customisation of learning programs for all students.

- Expert staff (internal and external to the school) are utilised to support student learning and build enhanced pedagogical practice.
- Individual learning goals are known, visible and valued by each teacher, family and student with a clear focus on continuous growth and improvement.
- Rubrics utilised to support student self-reported grades.
- Implementation of High Potential and Gifted Education Policy.

Success criteria for this strategic direction

- Assessment data is collected in reading and numeracy on a regular and planned basis and used responsively as an integral part of classroom instruction and school-wide intervention.
- Valid and consistent teacher judgement is evident across the school.
- All students articulate, understand and achieve their literacy and numeracy learning goals.
- Data and feedback inform teaching practice and direct learners and learning.
- The school identifies expected growth for each student. Students are achieving higher than expected growth on internal school progress and achievement data.

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

The school will use the following data sources to regularly analyse the effectiveness of the initiatives in achieving the purpose and improvement measures of the strategic direction. This analysis will guide the school's future directions.

- NAPLAN data
- Scout - Value added data
- PAT - reading and numeracy
- Student work samples
- Student focus groups
- Student PLSPs
- Staff focus groups / feedback

The evaluation plan will involve:

- Regular review of these data sources to provide clarity around whether we are on track for achieving the intended improvement measures.
- Regular professional discussion around the School Excellence Framework elements and themes.
- Executive team and whole staff reflective sessions.

Strategic Direction 1: Student growth and attainment

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

Analysis:

- Term by term review and triangulation of data sources including quantitative and qualitative, internal and external data to corroborate conclusions.

Implications:

- Rigorous analysis of the data to determine impact will guide bot ongoing implementation as well as future school planning to provide continuous improvement, ensuring students grow in their learning.

Strategic Direction 2: Quality Teaching and Inspired Learning

Purpose

To build strong foundations for academic success for all students by providing quality, explicit education with embedded and explicit systems that facilitate collaboration, classroom observation and the modelling of effective practice.

Improvement measures

Achieve by year: 2025

All teaching and learning programs show evidence of success criteria and learning intentions for English and mathematics.

Achieve by year: 2025

The school self-assessment against the SEF in the element of Learning and Development in the Teaching Domain is Excelling.

Initiatives

Explicit Teaching

A focus on developing a positive learning environment and high expectations for success underpin effective pedagogy. Purposeful feedback drives a cycle of continuous improvement.

- Stage teams collaborate around professional learning and explicit teaching practices to support individualised student progress.
- Teachers utilise formative assessment to drive effective and reflective practices.
- Professional learning in high impact explicit teaching practices to build teacher capabilities and collective pedagogical practice.

Peer Coaching

Staff are committed to providing the highest quality education to our students. We recognise the achievements, skills and expertise of our colleague teachers and support each other on our individual and school journey of improvement.

- Beginning teachers develop strong connections with colleagues through collaboration in professional learning.
- Teachers analyse their own and others' teaching practices within the school and are provided specific feedback about their lessons.
- Teachers work collaboratively to ensure their pedagogy aligns with research to improve student outcomes.

Success criteria for this strategic direction

- Teachers ensure the most effective evidence-based teaching methods optimise learning progress for all students.
- Teachers collaborate to share curriculum knowledge, data, feedback and other information about student progress and achievement which meet the learning needs of all students.
- Assessments are developed/sourced and used regularly across the whole school to help promote consistent and comparable judgement of student learning, monitor student learning progress, and identify skill gaps for improvement and areas for extension.
- There are explicit systems for collaboration, observation and feedback incorporated in high quality professional learning to sustain quality teaching practice.

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

The school will use the following data sources to regularly analyse the effectiveness of the initiatives in achieving the purpose and improvement measures of the strategic direction. This analysis will guide the school's future directions.

- NAPLAN data
- Scout - Value added data
- Pre- and Post- teacher surveys focusing on collaboration, explicit teaching and high expectations
- TTFM teacher and student SCOUT data
- Teacher professional development plans
- Evidence of observations of practice
- Teaching and learning programs

The evaluation plan will involve:

- Regular review of these data sources to provide clarity around whether we are on track for achieving the intended improvement measures.

Strategic Direction 2: Quality Teaching and Inspired Learning

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

- Regular professional discussion around the School Excellence Framework elements and themes.
- Executive team and whole staff reflective sessions.

Analysis:

- Term by term review and triangulation of data sources including quantitative and qualitative, internal and external data to corroborate conclusions.

Implications:

- Rigorous analysis of the data to determine impact will guide bot ongoing implementation as well as future school planning to provide continuous improvement, ensuring students grow in their learning.

Strategic Direction 3: Belonging and Engagement

Purpose

To develop engaged, connected and motivated students who feel a strong sense of belonging to the school community.

Improvement measures

Attendance (>90%)
Achieve by year: 2023

The proportion of students attending school >90% of the time increases from 81.3% (baseline) to 88% (lower bound system-negotiated target).

Wellbeing
Achieve by year: 2023

The proportion of students reporting a positive sense of wellbeing at school increases from 89.1% (baseline) to 91.8% (lower bound system-negotiated target).

Achieve by year: 2025

Students report at least a 10% increase in responses around feeling a sense of belonging in the Tell Them From Me student survey.

Achieve by year: 2025

100% of students are given opportunities to provide feedback on school systems and initiatives.

Initiatives

Wellbeing

Wellbeing in schools is for all students. A focus on wellbeing goes beyond just welfare needs of a few individual students and aims for all students to be engaged, connected and motivated and productive individuals who are active and positive contributors to the school and society in which they live.

- Updating whole-school approach to wellbeing processes to ensure monitoring, analysis and evaluation of student behaviour, attendance, wellbeing, learning and engagement data is evidenced through regularly updated PLSPs.
- Embedding the Wellbeing Framework into school culture through ongoing staff professional learning in effective wellbeing strategies.
- Enhanced student learning support processes to ensure flexible and targeted intervention is provided to support students' varying academic, behavioural and social needs.
- School systems are consistently applied to support all students achieve social, behavioural and academic success at school with a wide range of structured and flexible social development initiatives in place.

Belonging

When students feel a sense of belonging at school, they have positive relationships, value learning and engage with the school. Regular attendance at school is a necessary component of student belonging at school.

- Student attendance processes are reviewed regularly with attendance initiatives communicated to all families regularly.
- Parents are actively involved in their child's learning through frequent school-initiated conversations.
- Aboriginal children will be connected to school and achieve success, supported by staff that value the identity, culture, heritage and languages of our Aboriginal students.

Success criteria for this strategic direction

- Clearly articulated expectations of behaviour are evident for all classroom and playground areas.
- School Learning and Support Processes support all students K-6 and systems are in place to ensure responsive school practices of support.
- Families can articulate, understand know when their children achieve their literacy and numeracy learning goals.
- Increased SRC representation.
- Increased student representation in extra-curricular activities.

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

The school will use the following data sources to regularly analyse the effectiveness of the initiatives in achieving the purpose and improvement measures of the strategic direction. This analysis will guide the school's future directions.

- Wellbeing Framework self-assessment pre- and post-data
- SCOUT - attendance
- Suspension Data
- Internal school wellbeing data
- TTFM teacher and student SCOUT data
- Student representation for sport and extra-curricular events
- PLSPs
- LST data - referrals and support for students
- PLPs
- Teaching and Learning Programs

The evaluation plan will involve:

- Regular review of these data sources to provide clarity around whether we are on track for achieving the intended improvement measures.

Strategic Direction 3: Belonging and Engagement

Initiatives

- Student advocacy is supported through Student Representative Council.
- Students are provided various opportunities to achieve success in a wide range of academic and extra-curricular activities.

Evaluation plan for this strategic direction

- Regular professional discussion around the School Excellence Framework elements and themes.
- Executive team and whole staff reflective sessions.

Analysis:

- Term by term review and triangulation of data sources including quantitative and qualitative, internal and external data to corroborate conclusions.

Implications:

- Rigorous analysis of the data to determine impact will guide bot ongoing implementation as well as future school planning to provide continuous improvement, ensuring students grow in their learning.