

# TEACHING AND LEARNING AUDIT

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY - MIDDLE RIDGE SS

DATE OF AUDIT: 23-24 OCTOBER 2012



### Background:

Middle Ridge SS is situated on the southern boundary of Toowoomba. The school has a population of around 800 students from Prep - Year 7. The school has sustained gradual growth over recent years. The school has a team of experienced teachers who provide a wide range of academic, cultural and sporting programs. The school is very well supported educationally and financially by an active Parents and Citizens' (P&C) Association. Middle Ridge State School is an IDEAS school (Innovative Designs for Enhancing Achievements in Schools).

### Commendations:

- The Principal and other school leaders have developed and are driving an explicit and detailed local school improvement agenda. This agenda is couched in terms of specific improvements sought in student performances and is aligned with state-wide improvement priorities
- The school improvement agenda has been effective in focusing, and to some extent narrowing and sharpening, the whole school's attention on core learning priorities.
- The Principal and other school leaders clearly articulate their belief that reliable data on student outcomes are crucial to the school's improvement agenda. The school has established and is implementing a systematic plan for the collection, analysis and use of student achievement data.
- Parents, school leaders and teachers work together in a mutually supportive way and there is a strong sense of belonging and pride in the school.
- Staff morale is noticeably high and the tone of the school reflects a school wide commitment to purposeful successful learning.
- The school has a clearly documented whole school plan for curriculum delivery. Teachers are successfully implementing Curriculum into the Classroom (C2C) units and this implementation has been well supported by the Head of Curriculum (HOC).

### Affirmations:

- The co-operative manner of teachers in year level teams to support each other through the necessary change process to implement the Australian Curriculum is reflective in the positive school tone.
- The school has provided a range of professional development opportunities aligned to strategic priorities and staff members have demonstrated significant commitment to participate in these activities.
- Staff engagement in the Maximising Achievement Program in the area of reading is focusing explicit teaching and learning in targeted developmental areas that are identified through school data analysis processes.
- Staff members have collaboratively developed the explicit teaching lesson model that provides a clear guideline on the preferred lesson design in the school.
- The school's engagement with the Symphony of Teaching and Learning strategy that is designed to enhance the teaching of the ICTs and higher order thinking skills has provided staff members with a useful tool to support the integration of these strategies into the teaching program.
- The established goal setting is beginning to provide students with a clear direction and ownership of aspects of their learning program.
- The provision of well organised student support programs by the Special Education Program (SEP) and Support Teacher Literacy and Numeracy (STLaN) is respected by staff members and parents.

### Recommendations:

- Strengthen the Professional Learning Plan by focusing on the building of pedagogical skills and knowledge that are linked to school priorities. The process could also link the needs of staff members, indicated in the Developing Performance Plans, and staff engagement in coaching and mentoring practices. The process should involve the school leadership and staff members working and learning with and from each other.



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- Establish a reflective culture where regular data on the achievements, progress, strengths and weaknesses of individual students are used in all classrooms to make judgements about the efficacy of teaching, to identify individual student needs and to personalise teaching and learning activities.
- Continue to establish a learning culture where authentic negotiated feedback is provided by school leaders who spend time working with teachers to improve their teaching practices in the strategic priorities through modelling, evaluating and providing feedback on classroom teaching.
- Continue to promote the creation of a culture of high expectations of students' achievements. Embed benchmarks into key learning areas (KLAs) that indicate expected achievement for all students, including students achieving in the upper two bands.
- Continue to provide clarification of school based expectations in terms of teaching and learning practices, which will continue to build consistency of approach throughout the school, in all KLAs over time.

