

TEACHING AND LEARNING AUDIT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – MOUNT SURPRISE SS

DATE OF AUDIT: 28 MAY 2013



Background:

Mount Surprise SS is a one teacher school south-west of Cairns. The town boasts a proud history of gem stone exploration, farm grazing land and tourism. The school has grown to 16 students during 2013. The school has an extra teacher two days per week to teach science and support the English and mathematics Curriculum into the Classroom (C2C) units.

Commendations:

- There has been progress made since the previous Teaching and Learning Audit in the domains of An Explicit Improvement Agenda, A Culture that Promotes Learning and Systematic Curriculum Delivery.
- The school ethos is built around high expectations and a commitment to academic excellence. There is an expectation that every student will learn and achieve positive outcomes which is displayed, communicated and reinforced every day.
- High levels of trust are apparent across the school community. Interactions are focused on the learning and wellbeing of students and on continually improving the school's ability to meet the needs of all students.
- The Principal has given a very high priority to understanding and addressing the learning needs of all students in the school by focusing on the detailed individual student action plans.
- The school has established and is implementing a systematic plan for the collection, analysis and use of student achievement data which is clearly displayed on data walls with targets for reading, vocabulary, spelling and numeracy for every student.
- The Principal actively promotes the use of differentiated teaching as a strategy for ensuring that every student is engaged and learning successfully for reading, spelling, sight words and numeracy.
- The Principal demonstrates a strong conviction that improved teaching is the key to improved student learning and have clear and well-known positions on the kinds of teaching that they wish to see occurring using the explicit teaching model.

Affirmations:

- Staff members are keen to participate in ongoing professional development and are open to constructive feedback.
- Staff members are deployed in ways that best address the learning needs of students in a multi-age setting.
- There is a documented Professional Learning Plan and the Principal is implementing the Developing Performance Framework as the basis for professional discussions.

Recommendations:

- Ensure a whole school feedback system to students is timely, guides student action and is differentiated for all key learning areas (KLAs).
- Ensure vertical alignment of the multi-age curriculum so that there is continuity and progression of learning across the years of school, with teaching in each year building onto and extending learning in previous years.
- Ensure that all staff members use data to establish where students are up to in their learning, to identify skill gaps and misunderstandings, to monitor improvement over time and to monitor growth across years of school. Give a high priority to developing teachers' data literacy skills.
- Ensure programs meet the needs of all students including the higher achievers and gifted and talented students. Embed higher order thinking in all KLAs.
- Further refine the school wide self-reflective culture, with coaching and mentoring and openness to critique by colleagues, which is reflected in the fact that teachers regularly invite leaders and colleagues to visit their classrooms to observe their teaching and to provide feedback.
- Explore ways to include and engage students and parents in target and goal setting.