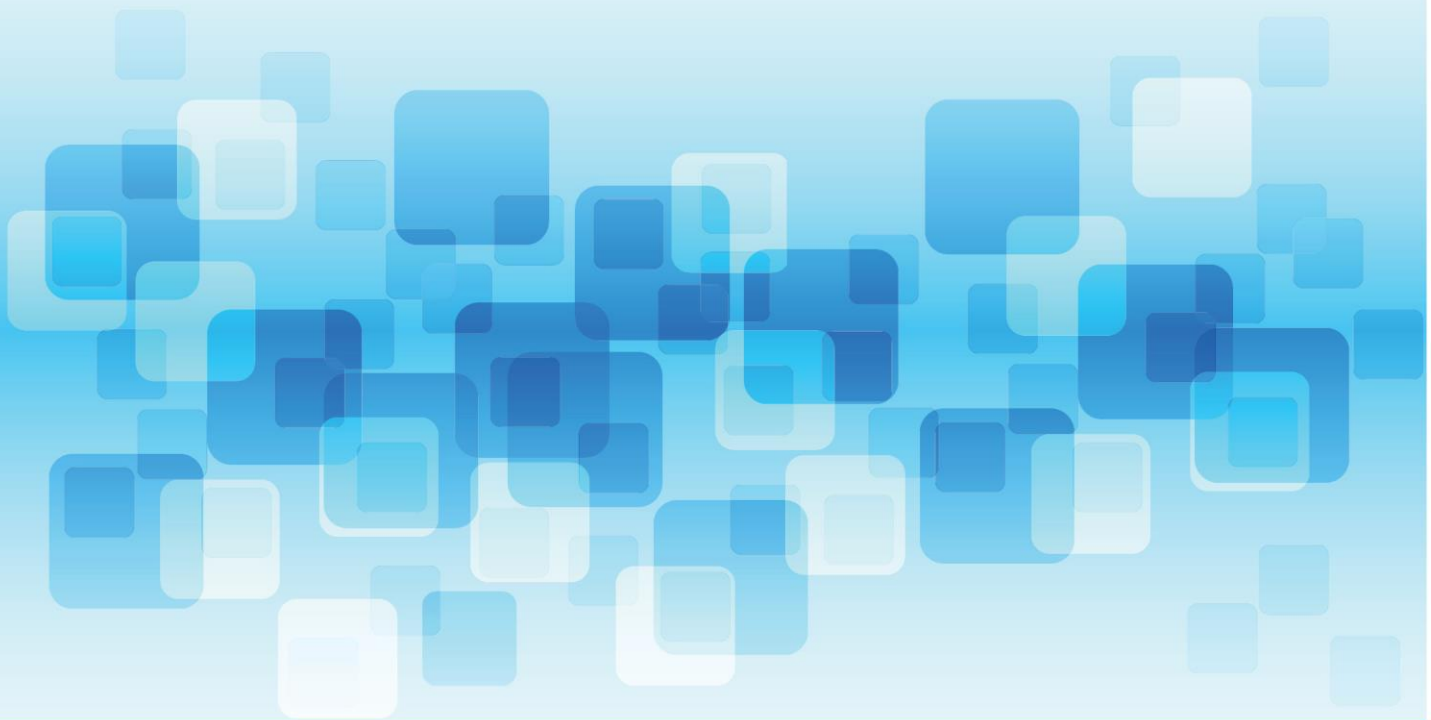




School Improvement Unit
Report
(Executive Summary extract)

Charters Towers

School of Distance Education





2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

- A strong school ethos of social justice is embedded in the school culture whereby all students are embraced and encouraged irrespective of their academic and social challenges.

The school has a proud tradition of welcoming all students who wish to re-engage with learning following exclusion from another school, ongoing medical issues, disengagement with learning or incarceration. All staff members believe in educational access for the full range of learners

- The school places a priority on making the curriculum locally relevant and accessible to all students and values and builds on students' existing knowledge and varying backgrounds.

This is demonstrated by the range of programs, courses of study and independent learning materials that have been developed by the school to address the identified needs of groups of students. These programs include targeted reading programs, core foundation literacy and numeracy programs, pathway subjects and vocational aspiration courses.

- The positive tone of the school reflects a school-wide commitment to purposeful and personalised learning and student wellbeing.

A high priority is given to building and maintaining positive and caring relationships between staff members, students, home tutors, supervisors and families. High levels of trust are apparent across the school community. Students and parents value the interest that teachers take in students' learning and speak highly of the school's efforts to meet students' needs.

- The school has a broad improvement agenda

An explicit strategic planning process, outlining how priorities are determined and when targets within the improvement agenda are monitored, is yet to be clarified. School leaders and teachers identify student engagement as a priority area and articulate the need for system and school support to improve attendance and engagement by students in learning programs. The school has a documented professional learning plan for 2016 which includes some of the school's 2016 priorities.



- A pedagogical framework is in place based on the Dimensions of Teaching and Learning (DoTL) model.

The key tenets articulated by most teachers are learning goals and explicit teaching including Gradual Release of Responsibility (GRR). The complete framework is not embedded within the teaching and learning practices of the school. A clear and consistent picture of school expectations regarding the application of set strategies within the model is yet to be developed.

- Staff members have individual performance plans and teachers demonstrate a commitment to the improvement of teaching and an openness to critique by colleagues.

Teachers receive feedback from Heads of Department (HOD). An opportunity exists to expand this model to include regular cycles of professional discussion and reflection and peer to peer lesson observation and feedback.

- The school acknowledges and has established and developed a broad range of beneficial partnerships to improve the learning outcomes and wellbeing of students.

Parents and home tutors are seen as valued partners in student learning. The school utilises a wide range of communication and consultation strategies to ensure all key stakeholders are informed and supported.



2.2 Key improvement strategies

- Collaboratively develop a clear and consistent strategic planning process to be communicated to the school community.
- Review and redevelop protocols and strategies regarding attendance and engagement in scheduled lessons.
- Design and develop a researched site-specific pedagogical framework which guides teaching practices and instructional leadership and enhances student engagement across the school.
- Revise the professional learning plan to align with the Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA) and identified needs of staff members supported through coaching, observation and feedback processes.