



**Catholic Education
Archdiocese of Brisbane**

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EXTERNAL SCHOOL REVIEW REPORT

School	St Francis Xavier School, Runaway Bay	
Principal	Peter Anderson	
	School Representatives	School/Community Role
School Representative	Ronnie Wilson	APA
	Jackie Cameron	APRE
	Jen Craig	Teacher / Librarian
	Maree D'Amico	Prep Teacher
	Deanna Russo	Prep Teacher
	Kaye Vague	Middle School Coordinator
	Lisa Patterson	School Officer
	Fr Barry Grayson	Parish Priest
	Terry Anning, Karen Melloy, Jacquie Drescher, Trudi Murray, Felicity Lenehan (P&F President and Committee)	
	Ryan Evans, Georgia Dyer, Jack Boulter-Milne, Briahna Belouis, Emily Cooper, Oliver Siva (Year 7 Students)	

External Review Panel	Name	Professional Position
Panel Chair	Damien Brennan	Director, Damien F Brennan & Associates
School's Area Supervisor	Trevor Doyle	Area Supervisor – South Cluster 2
Panel Members	Judith Seery	Principal, St Anthony's School
Panel Member	Paul McCann	Head of School Services, CEO Wollongong.
Panel Member	Hamish Valentine	Principal Schools Advisor, CEO WA

Panel Visit Date	Tuesday 19 July 2011
* Attached Documentation for NSSA Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Validated Internal School Review Records for Components 8.1 and 8.2 and audit of evidence template for Component 8.2 Accountability • Schedule for Visit • Annual School Reports 2008, 2009, 2010

Section A

School Context

This section is intended to include the panel's observations on the school's current context and associated challenges.

An experienced principal leads this vibrant school community in collaborative partnership with two very competent leadership colleagues who have all worked together for seven years. This consistency in leadership has impacted positively upon grounding the spiritual foundations in the Ignatian tradition, re-culturing the operational climate in terms of distributive leadership across staff and students, resourcing the curriculum based upon analysis of data, maintaining a commitment to staff formation and professional learning, and providing facilities that support learning & teaching and are well integrated into the master plan. Teachers work well in teams to support each other in delivering quality learning and teaching within the three major areas of the school in which they work. As well, there was evidence that all staff, share their ideas and expertise, and contribute as a whole to the school as a community of learning and the overall growth and development of all children within the school. Parents have a range of opportunities in which to be involved in and contribute to the life of the school community. The Pastor's participation in the school community is welcomed.

In its 36th year, St Francis Xavier supports the northern end of the Gold Coast and is a lively part of the Catholic parish. There is an experienced staff of 58 that teach and form 640 students. There is minimal turnover of staff. There are 25 verified students, 10 Indigenous, 1 APS student and a further 177 students who, although they do not receive specific supplementary funding, receive additional support in their learning. There is a very strong commitment to supporting the work of classroom teachers with additional and locally funded school officers.

There is good leadership to the classroom teaching of religion and the religious life of the school and clear expectations and direction in these areas.

The school is well master planned and has included its recent BER additions in a complementary manner. It was evident that this school community takes pride in the presentation, upkeep and maintenance of the classrooms, campus buildings, facilities and surrounds. The site also benefits from the use of adjacent public ovals for additional recreational space.

Section B

Engaging the school community with internal school review

The panel outlines its views endorsing and/or challenging the school's views, as necessary

The staff community is well engaged in contributing to the internal process through participation in and leadership of respective review working parties. They presented positive observations about this to the external panel. They articulated how school leadership had addressed proactively certain matters that emanated from these working parties (e.g. significant resourcing and professional development associated with ICLT).

Similarly, the P&F representatives commented favourably upon actions that they could see emanating from the internal discussions. They cited the examples related to student behaviour strategies.

There is good and controlled use of survey monkey on pertinent issues. There are structured forums for parent and student participation in dialogue about the key directions of the school. The panel observes that there is a variety of opportunities for the views of others to be sought on matters of significance.

The panel notes that, while there is enormous good will and great opportunities for engagement by staff, parents (and students) in the internal processes, it appears that there is more to do in educating them about how the various aspects "fit together" and lead into and shape the strategic directions of the school.

Staff welcomed the opportunities for active participation in the process of on-going review and the opportunities for leadership experience. They anticipate that others will also benefit from such opportunities to lead colleagues in such endeavours in the future. They also commented upon possibilities for limiting the priorities for major work to fewer areas so as to focus and conserve attention and also to enable deeper reflection before (and during) engagement in action.

The panel saw the lively and engaging parent, staff and student meetings with in the external review process to be indicative of the opportunities for the broader school community to engage in and contribute to the school improvement process.

Section C

Use of aggregate data on student outcomes

The panel comments on the use of **aggregate data on student outcomes*** by the school to enhance student learning, pedagogy and educational programs

There are good developing practices associated with the collection of and interrogation of a wide range of data to inform directions in learning and teaching. This is inclusive of NAPLAN data that has been used to initiate appropriate interventions (e.g. in the early years and spelling). Leadership has made good use of BCEO expertise so as to educate and inform staff.

Student progress appears to be well tracked and monitored and this is especially so for verified students and the additional school officer support distributed to support classroom teaching practices.

Data has also been used to inform and to monitor other initiatives such as the Behaviour Teaching and Learning policy and practices.

The panel observes that St Francis Xavier is progressing, as a well led primary school, in developing and making better use of the range of data held on students and in establishing protocols and practices for teachers to make better and more consistent use of this to inform their teaching practices. While much has been achieved at St Francis Xavier this is an area in development as in all primary schools.

It is clear to the panel that students in this community are well known by staff.

Section D

School Strategic Directions for Improved Learning

The panel outlines its views endorsing and/or challenging the school's view of the future directions

The panel confirms that the nominated area of transition of Year 7 to secondary schools by 2015 is a major area that requires attention. It commends the school leadership for the work it has done to date. Panel members who met with parents in the process noted that this topic is one that requires clear and strategic processes of communication in terms of the school directions and the impacts upon its communal life.

The panel also notes that this issue held behind it a broader issue that also emerged in discussions with staff and was referred to earlier in Section B. This was discussed with school leadership in the final working session with the panel. This broader issue is that of communication and education about how the strategic directions of the school flow from and are connected to the internal school review processes and practices. Currently it would appear that this is not as well understood as is presumed by school leaders.

Consideration might also be given to the pacing of the internal review tasks with a possibility of better aligning areas of annual review for two purposes: to bring synergy and clearer attention, and, to enable deeper reflection and discernment on matters raised through the processes.

The students highlighted a desire for the school community to continue to look for ways to support mission and outreach beyond the school.

The panel affirms and congratulates school leadership and those engaged in co-leading the processes and practices of review to date. Its final discussion with school leaders was in the context of "tweaking" current practices so as to identify the handful of macro (or umbrella) future directions under which other nominated areas such as the national curriculum and embedding the ICLT initiatives might sit.

Consideration might be given to terminology such as these as starting points for finalising macro future directions: Embedding the Ignatian tradition; Consolidating our learning community initiatives; Enhancing our distributed leadership practices; Building an evidenced-based and reflective culture; Transitioning the upper years.

Section E

A: Further considerations

The panel outlines any further considerations it wishes to make

The panel suggests that school leadership reflect upon this report and consider language and concepts that would suit the school context for naming a handful of macro areas for the next three to five years that are strategic, succinct and easily communicated. It is a matter of "tweaking" the many good things already in progress. It suggests that the Area Supervisor would be a valuable resource as this process is finalised.

B: Panel comments on the conduct of the external review process

The panel comments on the nature of the preparation for and implementation of the external review process

The panel commends the school principal and his leadership colleagues for the open and professional manner in which they engaged in this process and for the collaborative and approachable leadership they model to staff and students. The engagement of students, parents and staff was of a high order in this well run and energetic, welcoming and hospitable Catholic learning community.

Section F

Data made available to the External Review Panel

The following data was provided to the Validation Panel

- School Profile including demographic and religious profile data
- Internal School Reviews of Components validated by area supervisor
- Internal school learning data verified by the school
- School student achievement data externally certified (Years 3, 5, 7, NAPLAN data),
- Current School *Strategic Renewal Plan*
- Annual Action Plans and Annual Reports*

Experiences through which the Review Panel gained understandings of the school and its culture:

- Meeting with the Principal and School Representatives, and listening to their articulation of the learning improvement journey
- Learning walks around the school (including visits to learning spaces)
- Other experiences as noted:

External Review Panel Chair Signature

D. A. Brennan

Date

3 August 2011