

TEACHING AND LEARNING AUDIT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – NEW FARM SS

DATE OF AUDIT: 17TH -18TH OCTOBER 2012



Background:

New Farm SS is an inner city, Prep - Year 7, co-educational school with approximately 360 students in 15 classes. The school is part of the City Cluster of schools. The school community has a multi-cultural population with approximately 30 per cent of students from non-English speaking backgrounds.

Commendations:

- The whole school community is to be commended for its ongoing commitment to building a school ethos around high expectations, valuing diversity, engaging students in learning, recognising individual talents and supporting the needs of students. Interactions between staff members, parents and students are caring, polite and inclusive. Parents and community members regularly volunteer their time for reading, gardening, excursions, sports, gala days and school events.
- Since the previous Teaching and Learning Audit there has been significant progress in developing whole of school curriculum programs aligned with assessment and reporting. Teachers are successfully implementing Curriculum into the Classroom (C2C) units of work in English, mathematics and science and essential learnings in other key learning areas (KLAs).
- There has been progress in implementing an Explicit Teaching model with a clearly articulated lesson intent using We Are Learning To (WALT) and What I'm Looking For (WILF), gradual release of responsibility through I Do, We Do, You Do and lesson reflection.
- School targets, with a focus on increasing the number of students achieving in the top bands of NAPLAN tests, are clear and accompanied by timelines.
- A Gifted and Talented Mentor (GEM), partly funded by the Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C), provides extension and enrichment programs for students.
- Leaders and teachers meet regularly to discuss data on student progress and to plan collaboratively.
- Teachers' planning shows how the different needs of students requiring extension and support are addressed.

Affirmations:

- Teachers regularly moderate student work.
- Most teachers have participated in First Steps in Mathematics professional development.
- Teachers share criteria sheets/rubrics with students and use these for assessment purposes and to provide feedback to students.
- Teachers, throughout the school, take on leadership roles.
- Students set literacy, numeracy and personal goals each term and review progress towards their goals.
- Parents, students and teachers participate in three way conferences each semester.

Recommendations:

- Encourage and support teachers to take responsibility for the changes in their practice required to achieve school targets and to use data on a regular basis to monitor the effectiveness of their own efforts to meet those targets.
- Develop a 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.
- Include assessment data in writing and science as key elements of the systematic data plan. Use this data to identify gaps in student learning, to monitor improvement over time and growth across the years of schooling.
- Extend the focus on improved teaching methods to include writing.
- Ensure that differentiation is a priority of the school and a feature of every teacher's practice.

