SPECIAL PURPOSE REVIEW

KINGSFORD SMITH SCHOOL

NOVEMBER 2022

CONTEXT

The Director-General approved this Special Purpose Review (SPR) to support Kingsford Smith School (KSS) to identify and respond to areas requiring both immediate and long-term improvement with the review to occur in consultation with and with input from the staff, students, and school community.

Information and data from and about the school supported a focus of the review on operational aspects of KSS to ensure:

- the schools meet the well-being needs of students.
- the school manages workplace health and safety responsibilities on staff well-being.

It considered four key lines of inquiry:

- Student learning and engagement.
- Teaching practices.
- Leadership practices.
- Organisational practices.

There has been a support plan in place at Kingsford Smith School since 2020. Initially this plan showed some success in improving the areas of focus. However, as the support plan has transitioned to the monitoring phase the improvements have reversed. In addition:

- The Network DSI observed that, after spending several days at the school, many of the necessary systems and processes are in place but issues relating to student and staff well-being continue.
- Strategies to improve attendance and engagement at the school have not had the desired results and there has been disruption in the student services team.

METHODOLOGY

The SPR team collected a broad range of information for analysis including:

- Structured interviews with staff, students and school community members.
- Analysis of school plans including School Improvement Plan, Impact Report, ACER School Review and Support plan.
- Analysis of relevant school documentation and data including school performance and climate data.
- Observation of school routines including classroom visits.

The Terms of Reference and inquiry lines for the review guided the SPR team throughout the information gathering process.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Evidence-based advice regarding high-value areas for future school improvement efforts.

Each of these recommendations and the associated dot points should not be considered as discrete. All recommendations are interrelated and need to be integrated into the referenced implementation plan.

Recommendation 1 – Strengthen the integrity of school process to inform consistent staff expectations and practice.

Processes

- Further developing and documenting a suite of preferred pedagogies to inform teaching practice across the senior school (Also see Recommendation 4).
- Establishing routines to monitor and review actioning of these core policies and practices including student and staff data and surveys; student performance monitoring and evaluation of in-school and external assessment data.
- Building whole school consistency to KSS's key student expectation and management policies including PBL approach. This strategy should ensure that all teachers and support staff have the required knowledge and skills with particular emphasis on new staff (Links to recommendation 2).

Practice

- Developing a strong staff culture for improvement of pedagogy and student outcomes as a feature of frequent and routine formal (Professional Learning Teams - PLT) and informal sharing of successful practices. (Links to Recommendation 2)
- Creating a framework for proactive communications to include whole school PBL approaches; expectations of student and staff; protocols for restorative practice and parent engagement for all staff.

ESO support

- Ensuring that the school has the resources and models available to establish and maintain these processes and ongoing staff development.
- Prioritising the school's staffing to deliver the teacher resourcing allocation for the school.

Recommendation 2 – Implement a robust induction and development program for all staff

Processes

- Designing and implementing differentiated approaches to staff learning encompassing the developmental needs of new educators, teachers new to the school, new support staff, staff in new roles, continuing roles, and school executive.
- Ensuring an element of collaboration in design and reflection for all staff development programs.

Practice

- Establishing a strong PLT practice to share and enhance successful evidence-based teaching practices. PLTs should incorporate whole school PLT protocols and provide for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of PLT engagement and progress.
- Identifying key staff to support this work including providing coaching and mentoring to all staff.

ESO support

- Ensuring stability of executive staff to achieve continuity of educational and management philosophy, communication pathways, and workload delivery.
- Providing examples of highly successful PLT practice in ACT government schools to enable staff visits and documentation sharing.

Recommendation 3 – Strengthen the communication loop for decisions and actions consistent with KSS's Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) and student management practices.

Processes

- Ensuring that proactive and responsive student well-being and management practices are evidence informed and supported by real time student/school data.
- Establish routines for analysis of student engagement data as a regular role of identified school leaders including student support leaders.
- Creating visual representations about PBL behavioural expectations and practices.
- Reviewing current delivery of PBL explicit teaching of behavioural expectations in terms of who, how, when and where these teaching moments occur.
- Ensuring the KSS case management approach clearly identifies processes, roles, and responsibilities for successful engagement of individuals.
- Developing communication pathways specifically to the KSS broader community about the breadth of KSS approaches including "who to contact when for what".

Practice

- Building consistency for staff and students of expectations, restorations, consequences, and follow-up for negative behaviours within a construct of fairness.
- Leveraging staff and student voice in design of PBL and student management approaches
- Ensuring staff receive regular progress updates about student progress and challenges based on progressive data collection and analysis.
- Strengthening communication of KSS PBL, student management and attendance approach to parents.
- Strengthening approaches for student engagement with KSS Tier 2 and 3 provisions with a focus on students who attend school but not class.
- Investigating additional Tier 3 options beyond KSS including, but not limited to, long term work experience, work placement and Australian School-based Apprenticeships (ASBA), with the intention of resetting student engagement with learning.
- Establishing routine communications with all front office staff to ensure clear understanding of the school's intention for student engagement, attendance and communication protocols for dealing with the community.

ESO support

- Providing clarity to the school's leaders about purpose and access to Tier 3 student options beyond and within KSS including, but not limited to, long term work experience, work placement and Australian School-based Apprenticeships (ASBA).
- Supporting the school's development of tools to monitor progress of individual student behaviour, students at risk and whole school data sets for practices and initiatives. These tools should include regular surveys of students, staff and families.

Recommendation 4 – Design a KSS suite of preferred evidence-based pedagogies.

Processes

- Review pedagogical frameworks of schools that have successfully implemented and monitored the success of these approaches.
- Review the existing KSS PLT protocols to ensure they suit the contemporary needs of teachers.
- Develop a suite of preferred pedagogies to inform teaching practice across the school (Links to Recommendation 1).

Practice

- Emphasise to staff, students and families the intention of pedagogies is to establish high expectations for student outcomes
- Establish inter and intra faculty routines of class visits that include observation of preferred pedagogical approaches across and between all learning areas
- Ensure that PLT approach emphasises successful teaching pedagogies and improvement in student outcomes. (Links to Recommendation 2)
- Communicate KSS's pedagogical approaches to the broader school community.

ESO support

- Identify schools that have successfully articulated, and are monitoring success of, evidence based preferred pedagogies.

Recommendation 5 – Create a plan for the use, refurbish, and ongoing maintenance of the school's learning environments.

Processes

- Reviewing the current learning areas and staff/student spaces with an eye to reducing known areas of issue.
- Creating a staged action plan emphasising student engagement and emphasising short term sustainable gains.
- Reviewing the current timetable with an eye to facilitating time for student action and maximising engagement.
- Reviewing the impact of the current provisions for SEL, home room and LINK. Consider subsuming these important aspects into the planning and delivery of core curriculum.

Practice

- Developing a systematic approach to maintenance of all school learning areas.
- Engaging staff, students, and parents to harness energy, enthusiasm, and buy-in to establish improvement priorities.
- Creating communications to the school community signalling a reset of school learning spaces to enable the schools preferred pedagogies. (Links to Recommendation 4)
- Developing approaches that engage student and staff in school renewal in order to build pride and ownership.

ESO support

- Providing consultation to inform the best use of the school's physical learning spaces with an emphasis on improving outcomes for students in a safe and inclusive school setting.
- Providing school leaders specialist advice about resourcing, location and physical requirements of the student HUB.
- Allocation of resources to support the school's planned physical improvements.

AFFIRMATIONS

Based on the information available to the review team the following features and practices are currently being undertaken, or in the early stages of implementation, and are impacting positively on school operations or the school's improvement agenda.

Processes

- The schools staff calendar is a quality introduction to the school and appropriate for all staff.
- Documentation of the school's PBL approach as a vehicle to advance behavioural expectations in line with the PBL framework to strengthen a positive school culture.

Practice

- Senior executive's awareness and monitoring of student attendance and incidents.
- Willingness of faculties and teachers to work to develop curriculum informed by the Australian Curriculum.
- Students have clarity about what constitutes good teaching and the positive effect that quality lesson have on engagement.
- Teachers desire to be part of new strategies to improve student learning and the learning environments.
- Students, staff, and parent value whole-school/community events as a vehicle for community and school identity building.