

Darlington State School

School-led review executive summary

Schools are identified to participate in a school-led review following extensive data and context conversations. As part of the school-led review process, schools undertake activities to evaluate the current state of their students' learning and wellbeing. This evaluation is then validated by School and Region Reviews through community consultation.







Acknowledgement of Country

Darlington State School is located on the shared lands of the Yugambah and Mununjali people of the Yugambah language group who are the traditional custodians of this land. We would like to pay our respects to Elders past, present and future, and all Aboriginal peoples whichever Aboriginal nation they may come from.

About the school

Education region	South East Region
Year levels	Prep to Year 6
Enrolment	22
Indigenous enrolments	9.1%
Students with disability	27.3%
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value	995

About the review

 2 reviewers from 18 June 2024	 35 participants	 6 school staff
 16 students	 3 parents and carers	 10 community members and stakeholders

Key improvement strategies

Key improvement strategies are listed in order of priority. This is informed by the school-led evaluation and School and Region Review validation.

Domain 6 – Leading systematic curriculum implementation
Systematically enact implementation of the small schools approach to the Australian Curriculum Version 9, as it is released by the Department of Education, to ensure students receive their full curriculum entitlement.

Create opportunities for cluster leaders to develop a common understanding and purpose for moderation junctures to drive a commitment to collaborative discussions and consistent cross-cluster moderation.

Domain 8 – Implementing effective pedagogical practices
Review and refine existing identified pedagogical approaches to ensure alignment to latest research and a collective understanding of approaches to pedagogy relevant to the learner, learning and curriculum.

Domain 7 – Differentiating teaching and learning
Strengthen opportunities for teachers to understand and embed the general capabilities of the Australian Curriculum (AC) within their planning to support and engage the full range of learners including high-achievers.

Domain 9 – Building school-community partnerships
Strengthen opportunities for teachers to understand and embed the general capabilities of the AC within their planning to support and engage the full range of learners including high-achievers.

Key affirmations



Parents, staff and community members describe an overwhelming sense of community within the school.

Staff, parents and community members describe the strong sense of belonging within the school and surrounding valley community. They speak of the ways past families and students stay connected with the school, and of how current families are welcomed to positively contribute to school operations and student learning. Many families articulate their generational connection to the school. Parents describe staff as caring and approachable individuals who graciously facilitate offers of support to enhance student learning. Community members are proud and protective of their school and wish to see it continue to provide quality education to children in the small, rural community.



Staff view their team's strong collegiality and professionalism as a core strength of the school.

The staff profile consists of experienced teachers and teacher aides. Staff express they appreciate and value the collegiality of their work team. They describe colleagues as passionate and supportive. Staff talk about the opportunities to work closely together and learn from each other's practices. They describe high levels of support and trust, providing opportunities to give and receive feedback from colleagues to progress their capability to meet students' needs. Staff articulate they appreciate and value the role of every team member to enhance learning opportunities for all students.



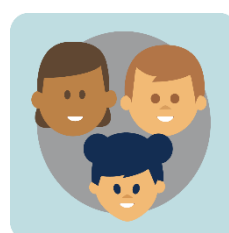
Staff members reflect an individualised approach to student learning, underpinned by strong relationships.

Staff describe their deep understanding of each student and their individual circumstances. They explain how they use this information to provide personalised care and holistic teaching approaches. Staff articulate the personal strategies implemented for each student, and their knowledge of students' learning progression and success. Parents relay this knowledge enables clear and specific communication about their child, complemented by a strong sense of care. Students speak affectionately of staff and of the close bonds they develop.



Cluster principals highlight the expanding collaboration of the cluster and the wealth of experience the principal brings as a respected school leader.

Cluster leaders convey respect for the principal and their leadership of initiatives and lead role in cluster work. They articulate they value opportunities to engage in professional and collegial conversations with the principal regarding solutions to problems of practice. Cluster leaders talk about opportunities available to them and their teachers to work closely together to learn from each other's practices. They express how these opportunities enhance teachers' practice and students' learning. They emphasise the role the principal plays in driving the moderation of student work and curriculum planning in the Christmas Creek Cluster. Stakeholders and cluster school leaders recognise the principal's depth of professional experience and knowledge, and speak of the trust and mutual respect the cluster fosters among the group.



Students are viewed as one of the positive attributes of the school, and position themselves as wonderful ambassadors for their school and community.

Students take great pride in themselves, their positive behaviour, and their school. They are seen by staff as a genuine strength of the school. The 22 students learn in one multi-age classroom and demonstrate great care for peers of all ages. They are supportive of each other and respect the rights of staff members and classmates. Teachers and visitors to the school describe students as polite, respectful, inclusive and supportive of one another. Staff, parents and students convey a family feel to the small multi-age school which manifests through student behaviour both inside and outside the classroom.



The principal's long-term leadership of the school is highlighted by many as a key reason for the school's positive contribution to students' learning.

Parents, staff and students describe the calm, caring and orderly nature of the school and the positive learning culture. They attribute the school's positive reputation to the principal, who they explain leads the school in a deliberate and strategic way with student learning and wellbeing at the heart of decision-making. Teachers describe this positive tone as 'set from the top'. They speak of the principal's collaborative approach and a culture of trust which fosters open and professional conversations. Parents and community members describe the principal as open to feedback and easy to communicate with.