

TEACHING AND LEARNING AUDIT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – PRAIRIE SS DATE OF AUDIT: 14 NOVEMBER 2012



Background:

Prairie SS aims to provide an environment focused on the learning of students so that each student develops a desire and an ability to continue learning, and continuously improves personal achievement levels to reach academic and social milestones beyond minimum acceptable standards. The school ensures that the learning environment is happy, enjoyable, safe and focused on teaching/learning practices that are reflective of contemporary and approved ideologies of primary education. Prairie SS is committed to 'The Dalrymple Alliance' a program of interschool networking, community partnerships working as part of the Flinders Small Schools Cluster to maximise opportunities for all students.

Commendations:

- Since the previous Teaching and Learning Audit the school has improved in domain five, Systematic Curriculum Delivery, through the effective introduction of school practices in reading and spelling and the implementation of the Curriculum into the Classroom (C2C) materials and related assessment tasks.
- In domain six, An Expert Teaching Team, there is evidence that the Principal sees the development of staff members into an expert and coherent school wide teaching team as central to improving outcomes for all students. In this field significant professional development has been provided to teacher aides to support their work in the classroom.
- The school has developed an agenda for improvement and school leaders can describe the improvements they wish to see in student behaviours and outcomes.
- Parents, school leaders and teachers work together in a mutually supportive way and there is a strong sense of belonging and pride in the school.

Affirmations:

- There is a positive tone to the school and this is reflected in a school wide commitment to purposeful successful learning.
- Physical learning spaces are used creatively and technology is accessible to staff members and students.
- The implementation of Developing Performance Plans and related professional development for support staff are sharpening staff members' skills and providing a clearer understanding of how they can provide targeted intervention.
- The school's participation in the Dalrymple Alliance is enabling strategic processes including policy development, moderation and C2C unit reviews to be collaboratively undertaken.
- The work that has commenced on the implementation of reading and comprehension strategies (QAR and spelling mastery programs) when embedded, will provide students with a consistent scaffolded approach to support learning.
- Structured differentiation is evident through a range of strategies at the school including groupings in literacy and numeracy programs.

Recommendations:

- Continue the work in the development and implementation of a pedagogical framework that will clearly articulate the 'Prairie Way'. The framework should also outline the recommended pedagogy to support the specific aspects of teaching relating to school strategic priorities, for example spelling, guided reading and comprehension. The framework should also consider the embedding and explicit use by teachers of higher order thinking strategies.
- Refine the explicit improvement agenda to ensure that it is couched in terms of the specific improvements sought in student performances and includes clear targets with accompanying timelines.
- Strengthen the professional development planning process by focusing on the building of pedagogical skills and knowledge that are linked to the school priorities. The process should also support staff engagement in coaching and mentoring practices and involve the school Principal and staff members working and learning with and from each other.
- Continue to establish a reflective culture where centralised data on the achievements, progress, strengths and weaknesses of individual students are used in all classrooms to make judgements about the efficacy of teaching, to identify individual student needs and to personalise teaching and learning activities.
- Enhance the learning culture whereby authentic negotiated feedback is provided by school leaders who spend time working with teachers and support staff members to improve their practices through modelling, evaluating and providing feedback.

