



# School Improvement Unit Report

## Tinaroo Environmental Education Centre Executive Summary

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background

This report is a product of a review carried out at Tinaroo Environmental Education Centre from 22 to 23 October 2015. It provides an evaluation of the school's performance against the nine domains of the [National School Improvement Tool](#). It also recommends improvement strategies for the school to consider in consultation with its regional office and school community.

The review and report were completed by a review team from the School Improvement Unit (SIU). For more information about the SIU and the new reviews for Queensland state schools please visit the Department of Education and Training (DET) [website](#).

## 1.2 School context

<b>Location:</b>	Black Gully Road, Tinaroo
<b>Education region:</b>	Far North Queensland
<b>The school opened in:</b>	1987
<b>Year levels:</b>	Year 4 to Year 12
<b>Current school enrolment:</b>	2502 (projected attendance for 2015) Residential 91 per cent, Day visit 9 per cent
<b>Indigenous enrolments:</b>	n/a
<b>Students with disability enrolments:</b>	n/a
<b>Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:</b>	n/a
<b>Year principal appointed:</b>	2011
<b>Number of teachers:</b>	2.5 (full-time equivalent)
<b>Nearby schools:</b>	Kairi State School, Tolga State School, Atherton State School, Atherton State High School. Yungaburra State School, Walkerman State School, St Joseph's Primary School, Jubilee Christian College
<b>Significant community partnerships:</b>	Visiting schools, Tinaroo Sailing Club, Tolga Bat Hospital, CSIRO, Apex, Barrabadeen Scouts Association, Maroon Outdoor Education Centre
<b>Unique school programs:</b>	Fantasy Writers Camp, Personal Development, Sustainability



### 1.3 Review methodology

The review was conducted by a team of three reviewers.

The review consisted of:

- a pre-review audit of the school's performance data and other school information
- consultation with the school's Assistant Regional Director
- a school visit of three days
- interviews with staff, students, parents and community representatives, including:
  - Principal
  - Three teachers
  - Unit support officer
  - Business Services Manager (BSM)
  - Cleaner
  - Visiting school principal
  - Two visiting teachers
  - Two parents
  - Eight visiting students
  - Telephone conversations with six visiting teachers

### 1.4 Review team

Mark Cridland	Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)
Trevor Gordon	External reviewer
Peter McKenna	Internal reviewer, SIU



## 2. Executive summary

### 2.1 Key findings

- The centre has a strong learning culture characterised by high expectations, explicit teaching and inclusive practices.

Staff, students and visiting teachers spoke positively of the quality of learning experiences provided by the centre and the high level of expertise of the teaching staff. The centre uses its resources in a deliberate and targeted manner to maximise student participation and learning.

- The dedication of staff is a strong feature of the centre's culture.

All facilities at the centre are well maintained, vibrant, focused on supporting student learning and aligned to the centre's vision of *'learning to enjoy and care for our beautiful environment'*. All staff articulate a personal commitment to student wellbeing and quality service.

- The centre's improvement agenda is outlined in the Strategic Plan 2012-2015 and progress has been made towards achieving the key priorities for 2015.

These priorities identify broad areas for improvement rather than a sharp focus on core learnings. Some targets are set in the centre's Annual Implementation Plan (AIP), however, the targets are not specific to an improvement agenda or accompanied by timelines.

- Data is collected on student learning at the end of each program and is used to inform practice.

The centre collects visiting teacher feedback data and has developed online survey tools for visiting parents and students. This data is shared and discussed informally on a regular basis. Issues that are identified through these discussions are addressed in a timely manner. A centre-wide data plan with explicit strategies and timelines for in-depth analysis is not yet in place.

- The teaching staff at the centre are experts in outdoor and environmental education and possess a high level of pedagogical knowledge and skill.

The Tinaroo Environmental Education Centre Professional Development Plan 2015 identifies a broad range of opportunities for professional learning and growth for all staff. A professional learning plan supporting a targeted improvement agenda is yet to be developed.



- The principal and all teachers recognise that highly effective teaching is the key to improving student learning throughout the centre.

The Tinaroo Environmental Education Centre Schoolwide Pedagogy identifies the evidence-based teaching strategies that underpin the experiential teaching process. There is a high level of understanding and effective implementation of the documented pedagogy. When discussing teaching practices teachers do not always use a common language or make reference to the pedagogical framework.

- The centre has a plan for curriculum delivery that promotes consistent learning expectations.

The curriculum plan is informed by the Australian Curriculum and has been refined collaboratively to provide a shared vision for curriculum practice. End of program surveys are designed to record student learning and to measure teaching effectiveness. Student learning in outdoor pursuits is being evaluated however it is not apparent in the documented curriculum.



## 2.2 Key improvement strategies

- Develop and implement a centre-wide explicit improvement agenda that is accompanied by targets and timelines, appropriate resourcing and professional development for all staff.
- Develop and implement a data plan for the centre which ensures data is collected consistently, analysed and used in a timely, responsive manner and is aligned to the centre's improvement agenda.
- Develop a professional learning plan that aligns with the improvement agenda.
- Refine the coaching and feedback processes to ensure teachers discuss and share teaching practices in relation to the pedagogical framework.
- Ensure there is alignment between the documented curriculum plan and the learning that is being formally evaluated.