

Fortitude Valley State Secondary College

Executive Summary





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1. Introduction

This report is a product of a review carried out by a review team from the Education Improvement Branch (EIB) at **Fortitude Valley State Secondary College** from **15 to 17 March 2021**.

The report presents 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 implement in consultation with its regional office and school community.

The report's executive summary outlines key findings from the review and key improvement strategies that prioritise future directions for improvement.

Schools will publish the executive summary on the school website within two weeks of receiving the report.

The principal will meet with their Assistant Regional Director (ARD) to discuss the review findings and improvement strategies.

For more information regarding the EIB and reviews for Queensland state schools please visit the EIB [website](#).

1.1 Review team

Alan Smith Internal reviewer, EIB (review chair)

Kym Amor Peer reviewer

Ken Rogers External reviewer



1.2 School context

Location:	St Pauls Terrace, Fortitude Valley	
Education region:	Metropolitan Region	
Year levels:	Years 7 and 8 (up to Year 12 in 2025)	
Enrolment:	299	
Indigenous enrolment percentage:	4 per cent	
Students with disability:	Education Adjustment Program (EAP) percentage:	6 per cent
	Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD) percentage:	28.5 per cent
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value:	To be advised	
Year principal appointed:	2018	



1.3 Contributing stakeholders

The following stakeholders contributed to the review:

School community:

- Principal, two deputy principals, four Heads of Department (HOD), Business Manager (BM), guidance officer, 15 teachers, six Education Support Officers (ESO), two administration officers, 28 students, 10 parents, Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) president, treasurer, secretary and assistant secretary and 'The Milk Box' chef.

Community and business groups:

- Queensland Police Service (QPS) Fortitude Valley Police Station Inspector, Church of the Holy Trinity Fortitude Valley parish priest, High Performance Teams (HPT) executive coach, King Street Bakery manager, Musette and CAMS Cycling Collective owner and Cox Architects director.

Partner schools and other educational providers:

- New Farm State School principal, Queensland University of Technology (QUT) Digital Media Research Centre associate director, QUT School of Teacher Education and Leadership associate professor, QUT School of Architecture and Built Environment senior lecturer, QUT relationships manager and Apple Education representative.

Government and departmental representatives:

- Councillor for Central Ward Brisbane City Council, State Member for McConnel, Department of Education (DoE) Building Future Schools senior project officer and ARD.

1.4 Supporting documentary evidence

Annual Implementation Plan 2021	School Data Profile (Semester 1 2020)
Investing for Success 2021	School budget overview
School newsletters and website	Curriculum planning documents
OneSchool	Education Brief (2018)
Student Code of Conduct	Continuous Improvement Plan
School pedagogical framework	School differentiation plan or flowchart
School Opinion Survey	Headline Indicators (October 2020 release)
College Signature Practices	



2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

The principal, college leaders and staff are committed to the development of an environment reflective of high expectations that all students will learn successfully.

From its inception, there is a desire for the college to be innovative and progressive with a strong emphasis on authentic involvement of community and particularly students, in the design and development of signature practices. Respectful and caring relationships are apparent in interactions between staff, students and parents/carers. Students express appreciation for the interest teachers take in their work and the additional time that so many teachers invest in co-curricular and extracurricular activities for their benefit. Parent involvement and feedback regarding the college are highly positive.

The college recognises the impact that high quality teaching and learning has on student achievement.

There is a shared belief that ongoing professional learning strengthens teacher capability. A range of professional learning opportunities is offered to all members of staff throughout the year. Executive leaders are intentional in their recruitment of staff that are committed to the college's improvement agenda and vision. Staff members report high levels of collegial support from their peers and school leaders, and describe a welcoming environment, aligned to the school's five pillars.

College leaders use data to assist in strategic planning for future college needs, including staffing, facilities and resourcing.

They acknowledge that systematic analysis, monitoring and sharing of data is able to be a key driver for student improvement. Leaders acknowledge the importance of diagnostic tools. Executive leaders indicate that the college will transition to an A to E Levels of Achievement (LOA) system by the end of the current semester. Some staff members articulate that this arrangement will provide the opportunity for consistent practices to monitor and discuss student learning data, and provide insights to their teaching programs.

College leaders are adopting an innovative approach to deliver the Australian Curriculum (AC), with interdisciplinary units of study a feature of the college curriculum.

Leaders encourage teachers to collaborate within cross-curricular teams to develop units where students investigate and respond to authentic, real-life learning experiences. All units are underpinned by a 'moral imperative' that frames learning for students and leads to deep learning and sustained engagement. Many teachers reference the overarching learning principles of the school's approach to curriculum as 'ability, access, and agency'. Leaders acknowledge the need for three levels of planning. An overview of curriculum offerings at the college is available, with an intention that an overarching whole-school curriculum plan will be developed over time.



The use of iPads in classrooms is an embedded practice and teachers outline ways in which these devices provide a genuine learning platform particularly for project-based learning integral to many of the college's six bespoke courses.

The principal and College Leadership Team (CLT) are establishing clear expectations regarding the use of effective teaching strategies, with the college's approach to pedagogy described as a 'fusion of proven practices'. The principal recognises that quality teaching practices are critical to engaging students and improving student outcomes. College leaders indicate the intention to prioritise teacher pedagogical practice as a key focus in the next strategic plan.

The principal is committed to high expectations, collaboration, personalised learning, and genuine partnerships, and articulates a desire for the college to be viewed as a leader in state education in terms of innovative practice.

The vision statement, '*creating a community of agile learners who are bold, resilient and kind*', guides the school's focus in curriculum, teaching and learning. The Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) outlines strategies, actions, and targets with respect to seven priorities for the 2021 school year. The principal and teachers articulate that the college's Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA) is systematic curriculum development. All staff members express an understanding of the importance of this work. Roles and responsibilities of the CLT are documented and communicated. Accountabilities associated with these responsibilities are yet to be detailed.

Leaders indicate that the college curriculum is values-driven, future-focused, has real world applications, and is focused on selection of general capabilities drawn from the AC.

Students indicate high levels of satisfaction with the courses provided by the college, describing their school work as engaging, interesting, and appropriately challenging. Teachers identify a future need that involves optimal preparation of students in readiness for the study of senior subjects aligned to the new Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE). The principal articulates an intention to ensure all students are suitably prepared for programs of study in their senior years.

The principal and college leaders recognise the importance of developing and maintaining quality partnerships with organisations locally, within the state, and nationally.

The college has established and developed partnerships with local schools, businesses, government agencies, and local community organisations resulting in the provision of extended learning opportunities for students and staff. Parents indicate strong levels of satisfaction with the college in communicating, welcoming and providing supportive transitioning for their students into a secondary college environment. Of particular significance is the partnership between the college and the Queensland University of Technology (QUT). Since the announcement of the intention to construct the school, QUT has been an active partner in the design and development of the college. This partnership continues to develop and grow. The college is a source of pride for staff, students, parents



and the community due to the impressive architecture and interactions with surrounding community.

There is a college-wide belief that every student is able to learn and achieve.

There is a whole-of-college expectation that differentiated teaching and learning is used across the courses to support the learning of every student. Teachers acknowledge that students will progress at different stages in their learning and at different rates. Staff are committed to engaging every student in learning opportunities appropriate to their readiness and needs. Emphasis is placed on identifying and addressing barriers to learning in addition to ensuring that all students are suitably engaged and challenged. Teachers value the ability to leverage digital technologies to support differentiation and students' accessibility to the curriculum and their learning. Assisted technologies are incorporated within the classroom including talk-to-text features, and the use of language translation features on student iPads. A comprehensive transition program is established for students with diverse learning needs as they transition from primary school to the college.



2.2 Key improvement strategies

Collaboratively develop and systematically implement agreed practices for the sharing and analysis of data at all levels to inform teaching and learning.

Fully develop the three levels of planning as required by the P-12 curriculum, assessment and reporting framework (P-12 CARF) and systematically monitor their sustained enactment across the college.

Clarify the expectations of teachers with regards to signature pedagogical practices at the college, and quality assure their implementation including the use of observation and feedback by college leaders.

Review and strengthen the statement of roles and responsibilities for college leaders to include key actions, implementation timelines and key deliverables in all areas of the college's AIP.

Review and measure the extent to which the college's interdisciplinary approach to curriculum delivery provides a foundation for student success in Years 11 and 12, in addition to achieving its stated objectives of students being 'good at learning and good at life'.