

2014-2015 school improvement plan

Ballarat Clarendon College

This School Improvement Plan has been developed in accordance with the Australian Education Act 2013 (Commonwealth), and meets all the requirements set out in regulations 44 and 45 of the Australian Education Regulation 2013 (Commonwealth).

1. About Ballarat Clarendon College

At Ballarat Clarendon College, we value learning as the key attribute of developed individuals and communities. We help students discover who they are, who they want to be and how to get there. In order for students to make optimum progress, the most important resource is the quality of teaching. Clarendon is committed to continuous improvement in teaching practice. In order to deliver on this commitment, significant resources are allocated to both maintaining a high standard of practice and to the identification and implementation of teaching approaches proven to be the most effective, as evidenced by student-learning outcomes. The professional learning program concentrates on instruction and student outcomes, and provides opportunities for inquiry, collaboration, feedback and connections to external expertise and research. Throughout a student's time at the school our focus is to maximise their competence, skills and capacity, so that, at the end of their time at the school, when they stand at the threshold of their future, they can choose their "heart's desire". The curriculum includes diverse sporting opportunities, performing arts ensembles and theatre productions, and involvement in local and overseas service activities. Clarendon is a co-educational day and boarding school, enrolling students from Early Learning to Year 12. There is a Junior (ELC to Year 4) campus, a Year 5 to 9 Middle School and Years 10 to 12 Senior School located in Ballarat and a campus on King Island where Year 9 students spend part of their year. As a Uniting Church school, engagement with values-thinking and personal ethics is built through attendance at Chapel and regular time spent with Learning Mentors and House Teachers.

2. Self-Assessment Process

As a basis for this School Improvement Plan, Ballarat Clarendon College used the National School Improvement Tool, which was developed by the Australian Council for Educational Research for the Commonwealth Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations in 2012.

The School Improvement Plan will be reviewed annually by the school's leadership team, and progress will be assessed. If necessary, the plan will be updated in line with the findings of the annual assessment.

The National School Improvement Tool (NSIT) identifies nine key areas for self-assessment. The school's leadership team has assessed Ballarat Clarendon College's performance against the criteria in each of these areas during 2014, and the results of the self-assessment can be noted below.

a) An Explicit Improvement Agenda

Self-Assessment Level: Outstanding

This performance level has been identified through the NSIT due to the following factors:

- Student performance in all areas of the school, from ELC to Year 12 is measured using a combination of external and internal data, and targets set for student attainment. A cyclic process of reflection linking curriculum, assessment and instruction is used to regularly identify priorities for work.
- There has been ongoing improvement in student outcomes in all areas of the school, as measured by external standards for a number of years
- Staff are required to analyse and review their own performance, based on data, and contribute to the development and collective understanding of instructional practice which has proved to be effective

b) Analysis and Discussion of Data

Self-Assessment Level: High

This performance level has been identified through the NSIT due to the following factors:

- Student achievement and wellbeing data is used by the Principal and other school leaders to inform key decision making about the management of all areas of the school.
- Data are used throughout the school to identify gaps in student learning. Data analyses are carried out regularly at a senior staff level and communicated to staff. Teachers are required to respond to this analysis and reflect on the instructional strategies they have used
- All teachers are members of subject based professional learning teams, who meet regularly, using data to reflect collectively on the impact of their instruction

c) A Culture That Promotes Learning

Self-Assessment Level: Outstanding

This performance level has been identified through the NSIT due to the following factors:

- At all areas of the school, the belief that all students can learn when provided with the appropriate instruction is prevalent. Interruptions to teaching time are minimised; student attendance levels are consistently high; staff morale as measured by the ISV Lead Survey data is consistently above that in other similar schools.
- Effective partnerships exist between teachers, students and families, as identified by the high level of engagement in the parent helper programs, and high level of attendance at the program of student, parent and teacher

interviews which take place for both classroom teachers and pastoral care teachers on a number of occasions during the year

- Teachers understand that involvement in classroom observations and mutual sharing of instructional practice is a key element of their work and are regular observers of the practice of others

d) Targeted Use of School Resources

Self-Assessment Level: Outstanding

This performance level has been identified through the NSIT due to the following factors:

- There are a number of systems in use throughout the school to identify the learning needs of students including work portfolios, writing progress documents and an electronic student care database, which enables staff to share necessary information about individual students.
- The Head of Intervention is responsible for developing Individual Learning Plans for students with identified specific learning needs and for ensuring that these plans are communicated to and implemented by the teaching staff
- The key subject areas of Literacy, Mathematics and Science are led by staff with a whole school responsibility, to develop coherent, school-wide programs in these areas. Students from Year 1 onwards have specialist teaching in Literacy, Mathematics and Science.

e) An Expert Teaching Team

Self-Assessment Level: Outstanding

This performance level has been identified through the NSIT due to the following factors:

- The ability or prospective teachers to engage with and articulate an understanding of the processes and principles of teaching and learning is a primary factor in their employment.
- Professional learning is primarily internal and involves teachers working in teams on at least a weekly basis to collectively reflect on their practice and develop teaching strategies
- High quality professional learning opportunities, that align with the goals of the school are identified and made available to staff members. These regularly include interstate and international travel
- The school is involved in long-standing professional collaborations with expert educators who are regular visitors to the school and work knowledgeably with teaching staff.

f) Systematic Curriculum Delivery

Self-Assessment Level: Outstanding

This performance level has been identified through the NSIT due to the following factors:

- The school has clearly documented standards for planning for learning, which are required to be implemented in every classroom.
- Unit plans are in place throughout the school which detail how the curriculum, aligned with the Australian curriculum, should be delivered in a way that aligns with the planning for learning standards
- Subject heads ensure vertical alignment and coherence between the unit plans at different levels of the school, so that there is a developmental pathway for the students to follow in each curriculum area.

g) Differentiated Teaching and Learning

Self-Assessment Level: High

This performance level has been identified through the NSIT due to the following factors:

- Teachers are required to consider current levels of student achievement, to identify skill gaps and misunderstandings when planning lessons
- Students are grouped for instruction in a number of subject areas across the school and these groups are reviewed regularly on the basis of the outcomes that the students are achieving.
- Reports to parents show progress over time and compare each student's progress to external standards
- Students in Y10-12 have a number of pathways available to them including VET subjects in addition to their VCE program

h) Effective Pedagogical Practices

Self-Assessment Level: Outstanding

This performance level has been identified through the NSIT due to the following factors:

- The primary responsibility of the Deputy Principal is for teaching and learning. There is a clear understanding throughout the school that the primary factor in improving student outcomes is to improve the quality of instruction.
- The primary responsibility of Heads of School is to ensure high standards of teaching and learning in their areas and to have a thorough knowledge of the practices that are being used in classrooms
- Subject department professional learning teams are engaged in the ongoing reflection and revision of unit plans, to ensure that best effective practice is documented and shared.

i) School-Community Partnerships

Self-Assessment Level: High

This performance level has been identified through the NSIT due to the following factors:

- A number of partnerships exist at different areas of the school to enhance the learning opportunities for students. These range from parent helpers with

reading programs in the Junior School, community service programs throughout the school and VET programs with external providers for Senior School students.

- These partnerships are planned and targeted to meet the identified needs of the students and to improve their learning outcomes

3. Areas for School Improvement

The results of the self-assessment process have identified the following priority areas for school improvement in 2015, and will form the basis of the School Improvement Plan. They have been divided into the five reform areas listed as objects of the Australian Education Act 2013.

a) Quality Teaching

- Continued evaluation of the subject-based unit plans based on the evidence of student achievement
- Developing consistency of teaching approach around agreed strategies, monitored by regular classroom observations

b) Quality Learning

- Ongoing review of student achievement targets, to ensure that standards are continually raised in all areas of the school.

c) Empowered School Leadership

- Development of the capacity of Heads of Subject to lead their departments in a data literate manner, focussed on student outcomes
- Improving collaborative decision making between teachers at a cohort level, to ensure consistency and adoption and understanding of best practice

d) Meeting Student Need

- Review of our school-wide model of student care, based on the desired outcomes for students in each area of the school
- Continual improvement of our school-wide use of technology to develop systems which enable tracking of student outcomes in all areas

e) Transparency and Accountability

- Improvement in collective ability to use the data from student surveys and classroom observations to improve practice.
- Development of reporting practices to provide clear targeted feedback on progress to students and parents

4. Additional Considerations

In developing this School Improvement Plan, the leadership team have also given consideration to the guidelines below as follows:

a) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Action Plan 2010 - 2014

Ensuring that all aspects of our program, commencing with our Early Childhood education, are:

- culturally inclusive

- cognisant of the social, emotional, physical and cognitive development of children and adolescents
- supportive of children during transitions to school and between then different stages of schooling at Clarendon

b) National Safe Schools Framework

- Continuing to work within the e-Smart program of policy review and implementation in the area of student welfare
- Continuing to implement an effective school-wide Health and Wellbeing curriculum, providing students with information and context for making effective decision about keeping themselves safe
- Annual review of policy framework and implementation, particularly the Respectful Behaviour Policy and Procedures, to ensure that they reflect the current situation and are addressing the needs and situation of the students appropriately
- Providing ongoing professional learning opportunities for staff in the area of student wellbeing.