



Visible Learning^{plus} School Impact Process Capability Assessment Report

Mawson Primary School

ACT

Time 1

August 2018

The Purpose of the School Capability Assessment

The school capability assessment framework is focused on the four key strands of Visible Learning^{plus} as identified below, and their research proven characteristics:

- The Visible Learner
- Know thy impact
- Inspired and passionate teachers
- Effective Feedback

The purpose of this report is to outline the findings of the Time 1 School Capability Assessment undertaken in August 2018

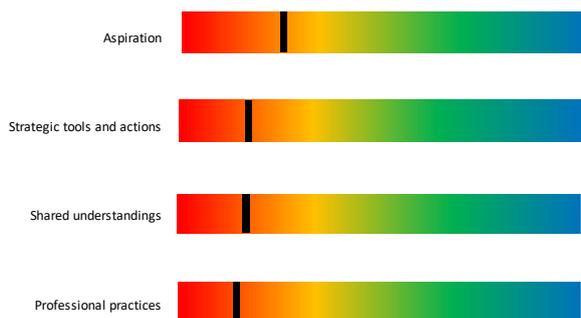
Limitations

It is important to recognise that this report is based on discussions, observations and evidence gathered from staff and students during a 2-3-hour visit to the school. It reflects a ‘snapshot’ in the educational life of the school and should be considered with respect to other evidence the school has collected.

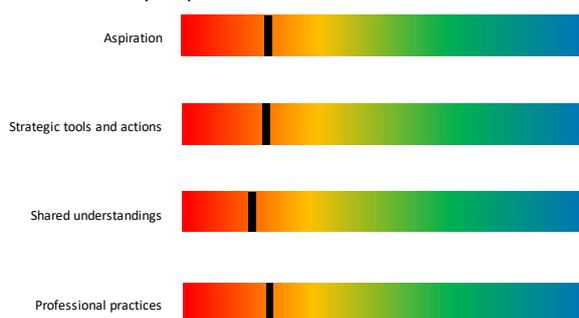
Ratings

Blue	This is common-place and systematically embedded in the school
Green	This exists in the school but couldn't yet be considered common-place or systematic
Yellow	Where this exists in the school it is in very small pockets, an exception to the rule
Red	This is not established practice in the school

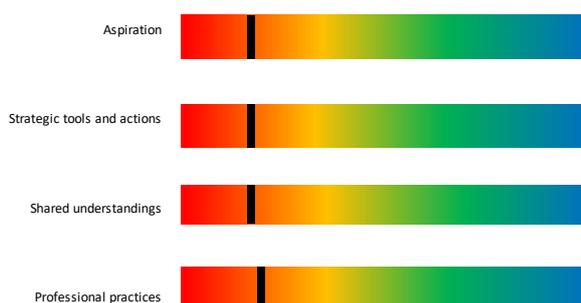
The Visible Learner



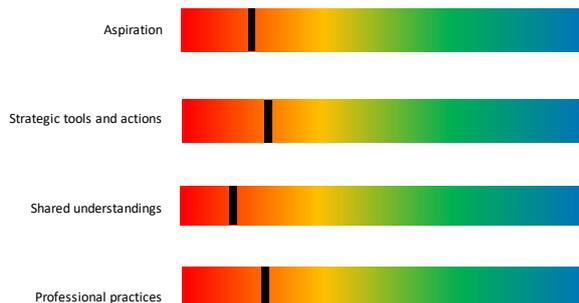
Know thy Impact



Inspired and passionate teachers



Effective feedback



Time 1, 2018

The Visible Learner

The school Leadership Team describes the picture of the types of learners they are aspiring to have as *“Confident bilingual students who are independent risk takers with 21st Century skills, they are positive and respectful with a love of learning.”* Teachers added, *“Reflective learners who do not give up and use a variety of strategies when they get stuck.”*

School plans were currently under review and 2018 was described by the Leadership Team as a year of review and planning for a new 2019-2021 Strategic Plan. The 2018 Annual Action Plan indicates an intention to develop assessment capable learners as a key performance indicator in Strategic Direction 1 indicating, ‘Students are able to articulate what they are learning and why.’

A shared view about the desired characteristics of learners was described by the Leadership Team as currently under development through collaboration of new mission and vision statements and small group consultation to develop a shared language of learning. Documentation provided indicated an intention for staff to make ‘learning intentions and success criteria visible in classrooms and planning documents’ and ‘teachers are able to articulate the strategies that have the highest impact on student learning.’

Processes and practices that indicate leaders and teachers empower students to take greater ownership of their learning were not yet established at the school and the school does not yet have school wide valued learner characteristics articulated. Student voice was seen as an area not yet evident across the school, the class meetings and SRC were described as based around community fundraising and environmental care.

When asked, *“What makes a good learner at this school?”* responses included, *“They listen”, “They are good at reading”, “Be nice to others”, “They know how to spell sight words”, “They work hard and practice, but sometimes they make mistakes. Mistakes help you learn”, “They think, they don’t give up and try their best” and “They learn, do their homework and say nice things.”* When asked, *“What do you do when you get stuck in your learning?”* students responses included, *“You go to the teacher”, “Ask a friend”, “Try and solve the problem ourselves”, “Look at the learning intentions and success criteria”, “Think for a few minutes” and “Use a strategy, like chunking.”* Although these responses represent a small sample of students across the school, responses gathered on the day reflected students varied understandings as to the characteristics of effective learners and the learners’ ability to talk about their learning.

Recommendation

Develop a shared view across the school (with students, staff and parent community) of the desired characteristics of effective learners.

Know Thy Impact

The school does not yet have documented evidence of a clear focus on learning and progress as opposed to teaching and achievement. The 2018 School Plan targets indicate increases in school achievement data.

The 2018 School Action Plan identifies an aspirational outcome under Priority 1 as ‘A targeted data collection plan is in place across the school and is used to inform teaching and learning and there is a consistent and continually improving school wide approach to teaching, learning and assessment.’ It also states that the Priority 1 is ‘to develop an expert teaching team that uses data and evidence to inform their practice.’ Currently the Leadership Team described the use of Data Trackers and Google Docs as a means of collating data but discussions indicated some inconsistencies around specific assessments and an assessment schedule was being developed with the staff.

When asked about an ongoing review of student data, there were varied responses from staff. Some areas of the school involved staff in analysing data as a team and reviewing percentage goals, others had input data on the shared drive but teachers were not accessing it for review or analysis. Overall, the review of data is usually done by the school executive and consistent use of data is evident in small pockets across the school.

Tools to monitor and track student progress and achievement include:

- SENA for Maths
- EALD scales progression data
- CARS for Years 5 and 6

- Otis-Lennon School Ability Test
- Reading strategies
- Individual teacher tests
- NAPLAN
- Teacher and student conferencing and anecdotal notes

These are not consistently used to track progress across the school and there is not yet a clear process in place of practice being driven by data and evidence.

There is not yet a shared understanding of what progress looks like across the school in any curriculum area and the school does not yet have in place a process for measuring the impact they are having on student learning.

During the visit there was evidence in small pockets of teachers sharing assessment data with students and students had individual goals posted on their desks and on charts within the room. Some leaders and teachers described discussions that took place to share assessment data and this could inform some future professional learning, but this sharing of data was not common across the school. The school Leadership Team indicated that evidence gathered from walkthroughs and appraisals was beginning to inform future professional learning plans and discussions for consistent practices across the school in 2018. There are some discussions on assessments and NAPLAN results in staff meetings.

There was not yet an established process of students being taught to be assessments capable learners. Conversations with students interviewed indicate that many students do not have access to assessment results to inform them about their learning so they know what they need to improve on. Most students interviewed were not able to share what their next individual goal was in their learning or that the teacher had selected the learning goal for the student.

Recommendation

Develop a clear picture and shared understanding of the purpose and agreed forms of assessment that will be collected, analysed and used to inform teaching and learning.

Inspired and Passionate Teaching

The School Leadership Team described that the quality of practice expected at Mawson Primary School is in progress and that they are developing and documenting a teaching and learning handbook this year. A Key Improvement Strategy stated in the 2018 Action Plan is to 'consistently implement teaching strategies that have been demonstrated to have a high impact in improving student outcomes and ensure a pedagogical framework of the highest standard.'

Currently in place are teacher's PDP using AITSL Standards as a point of reference and self- assessment but the Leadership Team stated there is not yet a shared understanding in the school about what makes a good teacher. Conversations with staff indicated that there is a limited perception of quality teaching and teachers have not had or had limited exposure to evidence based on high quality teaching and learning. To support good practice there have been changes in timetabling to clarify what is expected such as a 2-hour literacy block per day. Conversations with teachers expressed no opportunity to visit peer classes unless this is done in release time. They stated formal opportunities do so happen with feedback when requested but "*...it is hard to find the time for peer to peer observations.*"

It was reported by the school Leadership Team that there are layers of raising teacher capability and the school is starting to put in place deliberate and focused strategies. There are plans to promote teacher capability, shared understandings, and pedagogical framework of the highest standards based on observations in classrooms using a standardized form for feedback on practice.

The Leadership Team also noted that they plan to develop consistent practices in literacy, classroom observations and coaching as well as inter-class visits, and visits to other schools as an ongoing process. This is reflected in the specific actions to 'embed a Professional Learning Community (PLC) model' stated in the 2018 School Action Plan and to achieve that 'Every teacher's PDP is linked to the Mawson Primary School AAP, the Strategic Plan and Directorate's Strategic Plan.'

The School Leadership reported the degree of relational trust amongst the staff as satisfactory but there is a lack of collaboration and the expectation in the school of planning in teams is yet to be embedded. The Leadership Team noted relational trust had improved in 2018 and that Executive are working to build morale and a collaborative culture in the staff. They described relational trust as high between students and teachers. This point was mirrored in conversations with teachers who also spoke of a change in the school bringing “*a different feel*”, “*growth*” and “*changing systems.*” During discussions, some teachers stated that they did some planning together, but this was not common practice and was occurring in small pockets around the school. t

A 2018 School Annual Plan key performance indicator is ‘Learning intentions and success criteria are visible in classrooms and planning documents’. There was evidence of the use of learning intentions in pockets displayed on the board and in student’s books. In conversations with students, teachers were described as “*helpful*”, “*smart*” and “*fun*” and it was stated by students that, “*It’s safe to say we don’t understand to the teacher*”, “*My teacher is less complicated... so trust is good*”, and “*Our teacher cares*” reflecting a level of relational trust.

During classroom visits it was visible that some teachers commenced using learning intentions and success criteria to give students greater ownership of their learning and one child did indicate the use of the success criteria to self- assess their work. During class visits there was also some evidence of WALTs displayed in classrooms.

Recommendation

Develop a shared understanding with the teachers of the quality of practice expected of all teachers across the school, including processes that ensure teacher clarity and progress for all students.

Effective Feedback

Conversations with the School Leadership, students and teachers indicate there is some feedback on learning given and received in the school. This is developing but there is not yet a consistent model of feedback in place across the school. School leadership reported aspirations aimed at “*building a culture of how to give and receive feedback,*” starting with feedback to teachers. In interviews with teachers it was stated that there is “*a developing feedback culture*” in the school.

The school has embarked on developing a culture of feedback with some teacher observations and feedback to build relational trust across the school. It was stated that most current feedback to students is at praise level and some verbal feedback on writing is occurring in pockets in the school. Visits to classrooms indicated visible feedback comments in classrooms on pin boards and in some student’s books. Conversations with students showed students mostly described feedback provided by the teacher as praise and/or task level however some stated next steps were sometimes given verbally by some teachers about their work in particular subjects. Students reported feedback as “*Ticks in books*” and comments such as “*Good job*”, “*Well done*” and “*Excellent*” from teachers.

Conversations with teachers indicated “*a recently recognised raised awareness of types of feedback*” and that feedback to students includes “*one-to-one conferences, post-it notes and feedback after reading.*” There was evidence in pockets of student learning goals in writing, reading and maths composed and written by the teachers and visible on students’ desks or the pin board. It was observed behavioural goals such as ‘not chatting in class’ and ‘finishing work’ were also displayed as individual student goals in a classroom. Evidence collected during the visit indicated that feedback to teachers from students is not yet established practice at the school.

In conversations with teachers it was stated that “*Children don’t know what to say to each other and what to give feedback on.*” During discussions, both the Leadership Team and teachers indicated that teacher to teacher feedback needs to be formalised based on standards and observations.

Recommendation:

Build opportunities for teacher professional learning about the purpose and practice of using effective feedback and building a culture of effective feedback to students so they receive regular, ‘just-in-time’, ‘just-for-me’ feedback about their learning.