

School Review Report Summary

Darwin High School



Review	School Review Report Summary
Review Dates	21 - 23 September 2021
Principal	Jill Hazeldine
Reviewers	John Cleary, NT Lead Reviewer Sarnie Foley-Albutu, NT Lead Reviewer Miriam McDonald, NT School Reviewer
Document review	2023

Acronyms	Full form
ACER	Australian Council for Educational Research
AITSL	Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership
DHS	Darwin High School
DoE	Department of Education
NT	Northern Territory
NTCET	Northern Territory Certificate of Education and Training
SACE	South Australian Certificate of Education
SEL	Social Emotional Learning
SIEU	Secondary Intensive English Unit
SRC	Student Representative Council
SSIU	School and System Improvement Unit
SWPB	School Wide Positive Behaviour

School Context

School Sector:	Government
School Type:	Senior
Year Range:	10-12
Geolocation:	Urban
Region:	Darwin

Staff	Number interviewed
School Leaders	6
Permanent teachers*	32
Teaching support staff	3
Parents	9
Students	39
Others	3

Commendations

- There is a clear commitment to the achievement of students at Darwin High School (DHS) with young people sharing stories of the range of ways that teachers and leaders work to support them to meet their potential, often outside of expected learning times. Students shared that teachers at the school work hard to support their growth and provide feedback regularly to support learning progress. Many students also described the transformational impact of particular teachers on their own learning journey and level of engagement at the school.
- The DHS leadership team work closely together with a clear commitment to the future improvement journey of the school. Leaders are calm, available and were identified by students to be role models for others, particularly in ensuring individual students felt known, valued and cared for.
- The Secondary Intensive English Unit (SIEU) supports student wellbeing and belonging through an integrated approach to social and emotional learning. This includes adapting the DHS Social Emotional Learning (SEL) program for student interest and needs, including sex education delivered by the Melaleuca Refugee Centre. In addition, for new students the 'Settling In Program' tailored for the SIEU by a teacher and counsellor provides additional support. SEL is delivered by the students' English teacher who is well known to students and supported by multiple Home Language Officers, representative of the languages spoken across the SIEU. Additional support is provided by external agencies such as Legal Aid and Anglicare.

Affirmations

- The Student Representative Council and their role on the DHS board; and the appetite and interest from a range of students across the school to contribute directly to the design, delivery and evaluation of future school improvement efforts at the school.
- The use of a school management system (Compass) to enable access to timely, clear and easily accessible information on daily schedules, assessment tasks and communication for academic progress and individual student needs, between students, staff and families.
- The availability of resources for students in need of non-academic support at the school and the investment in a range of positions to support students, alongside the dedication and professionalism of staff who provide this support.
- The Pivot surveys, aligned to the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) teacher standards, which are increasingly being used across the school by teachers to evaluate and enhance their teaching practice.
- Staff delivery of peer-to-peer professional learning to support the introduction of the School Wide Positive Behaviour approach, with opportunities for distributed leadership and a variety of learning options targeted at the needs and interests of staff.
- The highly qualified and experienced staff at DHS who are members of Professional Learning Associations, and South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) markers and moderators, demonstrating the school's commitment to forming an expert teaching team.
- The school's participation in a School Wide Positive Behaviour (SWPB) network, inclusive of five Darwin schools, with an intended focus on learning from each other's progress on their own individual SWPB journey.
- The ongoing commitment to the delivery of SEL, which is supported by a core group of staff who have a passion for the subject and show willingness to be creative and adaptable with an aspiration to deliver a program that is responsive to student needs and interests.
- The delivery of the 'Young Change Agents' approach to social and emotional learning that builds on and values the strengths that the students bring to their learning. Co-designed with students and led in collaboration with local Indigenous leaders and business people, this program fosters a sense of identity and connectedness and engenders high levels of engagement.
- The 'Young Change Agent' program's 'train the trainer' approach for the way in which it supports teachers to develop their expertise in delivering highly interactive SEL lessons, which fosters student ownership and agency.

Recommendations

- Renew the school's approach to building a culture for all members of the DHS community that is safe, respectful, tolerant, inclusive, promotes intellectual rigor and values student wellbeing. This should include:
 - A collaborative review and definition of the values which represent the DHS community, ensuring these are owned by staff, parents, families and students.
 - An approach to ensuring that these values are well known, understood, visible and promoted across the school community; as well as embedded into clear expectations for what they mean for students and staff at the school.
 - Embedded strategies to promote appropriate behaviour with agreed responses and consequences for inappropriate behaviour.
 - Deliberate efforts to build a culture of connection and belonging across all year levels and faculties.
 - The renewal of school committees and working groups to support this effort, with clear protocols and ways of working.
 - The broadening of opportunities for staff and students to work collaboratively in the design, implementation and evaluation of school improvement efforts.

- Collectively develop structures and processes that ensure the school applies its resources (staff time, expertise, funds, facilities and materials) in a targeted manner to meet the wellbeing needs of all students, that includes;
 - A vision for wellbeing at the school, with accompanying principles, policies, practices and programs to achieve this vision and its accompanying goals;
 - Processes for the collection and analysis of wellbeing data to inform decision making, and monitor its impact on student wellbeing;
 - Creative school wide solutions to address identified barriers;
 - The coordination and deployment of staff in ways that make the best use of their expertise in order to identify and respond to student need;
 - Clearly identified roles and responsibilities that are well known by students, staff, parents and families and are monitored by the leadership team.
 - An approach to pastoral care that ensures that every student has an accessible, identified adult at the school who knows, values and cares for them;
 - A case management approach for students with identified and additional wellbeing needs, for students across all years of schooling.

- Engage in a collaborative process with staff, students and families to develop a locally relevant curriculum delivery plan for SEL that:
 - Is aligned to the relevant Northern Territory (NT), Australian Curriculum and SACE documents and the school's vision for young people at DHS;
 - Values and builds on students' strengths, existing knowledges and diversity;
 - Integrates relevant general capabilities, cross curricular skills and attributes, so that all students, including those with additional needs, are engaged in learning that challenges, deepens understanding and supports good decision making;
 - Has a clearly defined scope and sequence, inclusive of agreed short-term and long-term plans to ensure vertical alignment. This should build on SEL provision in the middle years' to ensure the continuity and progression of learning from one-year level to the next;
 - Provides sufficient time and resources, ensuring that internal and external expertise are deployed in ways that respond to need and enhance the teaching and learning of SEL;
 - Ensures all staff have a shared understanding of the expectations for how an effective, evidence based SEL curriculum is to be taught at DHS;
 - Creates opportunities for staff to engage in professional learning, collaboratively plan, seek feedback and evaluate their teaching of SEL in order to further develop staff confidence and expertise;
 - Is embedded in leadership structures with clear roles and responsibilities that are well known by staff; and
 - Is regularly monitored by school leaders for the fidelity of its delivery and its effectiveness in improving students' well-being outcomes.

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EDUCATION **NT**
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