1. Introduction

1.1 Background
This report is a product of a review carried out at Gunalda State School from 23 to 24 April 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

| Location: | King Street, Gunalda |
| Education region: | North Coast |
| The school opened in: | 1886 |
| Year levels: | Prep to Year 6 |
| Current school enrolment: | 23 |
| Indigenous enrolments: | 13 per cent |
| Students with disability enrolments: | 26 per cent |
| Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value: | 919 |
| Year principal appointed: | 2015 |
| Number of teachers: | 3 |
| Nearby schools: | Theebine State School, Glenwood State School, Bauple State School, Tiaro State School, Chatsworth State School, Gundiah State School |
| Significant community partnerships: | Gunalda Kindergarten |
| Unique school programs: |
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/Principal Supervisor
- a school visit of two days
- interviews with staff, students, parents and community representatives, including:
  - Assistant regional director (ARD)
  - Principal coach
  - Principal
  - Seven school staff
  - 13 students
  - Six parents and community members

1.4 Review team

Stephen Auer Internal reviewer, SIU (review chair)
Pat Murphy Internal reviewer, SIU
2. Executive summary

2.1 Key findings

- The school has experienced significant staff turnover which has impacted on all areas of school operations.

Staff reported the difficulties they have encountered as a result of high principal turnover - 20 school principals in the last 14 years. Parents expressed concerns about the amount of change in the school staff and the effect on their children’s learning. School National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) results have remained below the national average in many areas of mean scale scores (MSS) and upper two bands (U2B) populations for three years.

- Student data is used by teachers to differentiate learning for most students.

All students at various stages of their learning are being catered for at an individual level. Individual curriculum plans have been written for those students who require them by visiting support staff. There was no evidence of the targeting of more able students with specific learning goals.

- Feedback to students about their learning is an inconsistent practice in the school.

Some students were able to show or give examples of feedback from their teacher, however students believed that this did not always help them improve their learning.

- There are agreed school pedagogical practices, however there are no formal supervision, coaching and mentoring processes to ensure consistent school wide practice.

Staff work together and learn from each other’s practices, mainly through professional sharing at staff meetings. The school does not have in place a systematic manner to improve teaching practices that involves modelling, coaching or providing feedback to one another. Staff report a willingness to accept feedback to enhance their teaching practices.

- School staff identified the need for a whole school curriculum overview and an assessment framework.

Curriculum delivery is aligned with the Australian Curriculum (AC) through the Curriculum into the Classroom (C2C) resource. Unit plans are developed by each teacher using the multi-age C2C program. Teachers do not plan in a systematic manner and the expectations of what teachers require in their planning have not been documented.
The school communicates with and promotes involvement of parents and the broader community.

The school regularly shares curriculum offerings, for example, term overviews and explanations of teaching strategies, with parents and the wider school community.

School staff positively and actively promote the involvement of parents and wider school community in assisting the delivery of curriculum to students. The communication of explicit targets for student improvement to parents is yet to occur.
2.2 Key improvement strategies

- Maintain a narrow and sharp improvement agenda. Explore all resources available both in the school and the region to achieve this agenda.

- Co-develop a Human Resources Plan with regional personnel to ensure the continuity of leadership and teaching staff. Analyse the use of school resources to minimise the effect of constant staff changes through the development of a workforce management plan.

- Establish a feedback culture in the school that encourages and assists students to monitor their own learning and set goals for future learning.

- Develop a supervision, mentoring and coaching mechanism over time that will provide the feedback to enhance teaching practice of all staff and drive the improvement agenda.

- Develop a whole school curriculum overview including an assessment framework that clearly articulates a consistent process of curriculum delivery for teachers.

- Continue to develop a range of communication strategies with parents and the wider community to build and enhance educational partnerships that are essential to the achievement of student learning outcomes.