Capricornia School of Distance Education – Emerald Campus

School review executive summary

About the school

Capricornia School of Distance Education acknowledges the shared lands of Darumbal nation and the Darumbal people of the Darumbal language region, as well as the shared lands of the Gayiri nation and the Gayiri people of the Gayiri language region.

Education region	Central Queensland Region
Year levels	eKindy to Year 12
Enrolment	4303
Indigenous enrolments	17%
Students with disability	28%
Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) value	964

About the review

5 reviewers from 13 to 17 November 2023	264 participants	123 school staff
88 students	44 parents and carers	9 community members and stakeholders

Key improvement strategies

Domain 1: Driving an explicit improvement agenda

Refine the vision for the school's role in providing equitable access to education for the diversity of student enrolments to clarify the investments that are required to support all students.

Domain 8: Implementing effective pedagogical practices

Investigate key evidence-informed pedagogical approaches for teaching in a digital learning environment to support student engagement in learning.

Domain 6: Leading systematic curriculum implementation

Strengthen teachers' skills in developing unit plans and designing assessment tasks to support curriculum implementation that is relevant and adapted to the school's context.

Domain 7: Differentiating teaching and learning

Broaden teachers' understanding of effective differentiation practices for the digital learning environment to enhance student engagement and learning experiences aligned to the curriculum that cater for the full range of learners.

Domain 3: Promoting a culture of learning

Develop a school-wide approach for monitoring and supporting staff and student-wellbeing to enhance existing practices for pastoral care.

Key affirmations

Care, respect and a belief of 'students first' drives the culture of the school.

A strong narrative is apparent across the school which supports its mantra, 'we take them all, we love them all'. 'Students first' care and relationships is spoken of by teachers, teacher aides and leaders as a high priority and shared belief, and is apparent in their approach to teaching and learning. This approach is highly valued by parents and students. They speak highly of teaching staff and their caring, supportive and trusting relationships that create an environment in which students feel safe and have a sense of belonging. Many staff, students and parents value the importance of Mini-School and how it provides an opportunity for connection between distance learning and the physical school and people, and furthers the development of this sense of belonging and connection. Parents of students with diverse learning needs express appreciation for the commitment of staff to support their child. Many stories are shared by these parents of how this is the first school where their child has experienced success.

Parents and home tutors are integral to teaching and learning partnerships with the school.

A strong collaboration of shared responsibility for teaching and learning between teachers, students and parents is apparent. Positive relationships are developed with key stakeholders, and connections are enriched through Mini-School. Parents and home tutors are highly appreciative of Mini-School activities and express that these are opportunities to build productive relationships with school staff and other parents. Parents appreciate the support provided to them through Professional Development sessions and induction programs. Parents appreciate the invitation to participate in online lessons, and their contributions are viewed by staff as fundamental to the teaching and learning process in the distance education context.

A wide range of senior schooling options provide valued post-school opportunities for students.

Students and parents express appreciation for the range of senior schooling curriculum offerings, including Australian Tertiary Admission Rank, Vocational Education and Training and applied courses, as well as opportunities for School-based Apprenticeships and Traineeships. A wide range of external learning, industry and wellbeing partnerships are established to support student learning which develop into valued post-school options for students. Leaders are excited for a forthcoming industry breakfast, co-funded by the local council, designed to support articulation between the school and students' post-school destinations. Parents convey appreciation for the support their child receives to successfully complete their schooling, and the range of post-school pathways provided.

Leaders speak of the importance of connecting and engaging with external bodies to enhance the work in the school.

Leaders reference the collaborative work they have undertaken with an external consultant in clarifying the leadership structure and roles of the team. They describe how this has built collective capacity characterised by teamwork and shared responsibility. Considerable work has occurred in consultation with the regional Principal Advisor – Teaching and Learning in building the curriculum capability of middle leaders and establishing consistency in relation to year level and band plans. Many teachers speak proudly of online cultural and language exchanges that are established with the Oshu City Council school area in Japan. Leaders articulate that students participating in the program from both Japan and Capricornia highly value the interaction and discuss it is enhancing their engagement with the Languages curriculum. Some links occur with other Schools of Distance Education at the principal level, with school leaders looking to enhance these at other levels in the school.

Queensland Government