

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT CASE STUDY

AL-FAISAL COLLEGE (AUBURN)



Al-Faisal College started their school improvement journey in 2010¹. They were already an established K-12 school but when they analysed their students' standardised testing data, the college identified student levels of achievement and growth had been plateauing for a number of years. After further analysis, the senior leadership team identified the area of reading as a high priority for improvement across the college.

*"We wanted to have set targets,
we wanted to have critical
measures in place..."*

DEVELOPING A PROCESS FOR IMPROVEMENT

The senior leadership team knew they had to establish a process and a culture that would equip and empower all staff to achieve the target goals. This was achieved through a number of steps, repeated for every new phase of improvement, and which evolved into the college's school improvement process.

The process involved:

- Using data to identify priority areas for improvement;
- Researching current best practice with evidence of impact in the priority areas;
- Formulation of critical targets and goals with specific measures of impact;
- Articulation of a K-12 vision for the next five years in student growth and achievement in these priority areas;
- Establishing a "guiding coalition" of teachers and parents to develop appropriate strategies;
- Providing a structured program of quality professional learning;
- Providing time for staff to engage with data and collaboratively develop new programs;
- Evaluation of programs through data analysis and measures of impact.

*"for us it was really important to
target our staff, we really wanted to
make sure that they were upskilled,
we wanted to empower them..."*

In the initial stages of their journey, senior leadership led the improvement process. However, the goal had always been to empower staff to lead improvement from within the classroom, and by 2017 this was occurring. Staff had become confident in three key areas: analysing myriad sources of student data (both academic and wellbeing); collaboratively building programs that addressed student learning needs; and modelling a culture of high expectations and growth. The leadership team continued to provide the professional learning and resources required to achieve this highly effective, distributed leadership approach. The college also ensured new staff received all the support and training they needed through a structured induction and mentoring program.

School Profile

- K-12, co-educational
- Established in 1998
- 2,200 students
- Metropolitan Sydney (NSW)

Prominent features

- Collecting and analysing baseline data
- Specifying desired outcome improvements
- Measuring and monitoring improvements

Data showing growth and change

Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR)

Growth in High Achiever level of attainment:
Percentage of students recording ATAR above 90 rose from 18% in 2014 to 44% in 2018.

School-based survey

Key findings from surveys that reflect changes to attitudes, perceptions, professional learning, content knowledge and pedagogy include:

- 96% of primary school teachers believed providing greater professional development opportunities have helped to improve learning outcomes for students in literacy across all KLAs.
- 90% of staff now support the school's model for teaching phonemic awareness and phonics across K-3
- 95% of secondary staff believe that literacy is taught effectively across the secondary curriculum compared to 20% in 2011
- 93% of K-12 staff stated that they have modified their teaching practices to integrate literacy strategies as a result of participating in professional learning

Student Retention:

87% of the 2016 Year 10 cohort who started at Al-Faisal College, completed Year 12 in 2018. This is the highest retention rate for the past five years, up from 60% during 2014-2016.



WHAT HAPPENED IN THE CLASSROOM, AS A RESULT OF THE IMPROVEMENT PROCESS?

Al-Faisal College had identified reading as their first improvement priority. Literacy programs were introduced, based on explicit instruction and 3-Tier approaches to assisting students at their point of need. This pedagogy was adapted to other areas of the curriculum and subsequent target areas, such as numeracy and languages. Learning routines and metalanguage was systematically introduced across the college. Staff also shared with students an understanding of data analysis, which slowly built a culture of self-evaluation and growth.

In 2016, the college identified a new priority area. Data was pointing towards the need for a stronger student learning culture based on the college values and principles of positive behaviour. The focus was underpinned by a belief that academic achievement, which is one of the college's core values, can be more effectively delivered in a classroom that prioritises positive behaviours for learning. The ROARS (respect, ownership, achievement, responsibility and safety) program was developed for implementation across the college over the space of eighteen months. Initial development was carried out by a steering committee of representatives from across K-12, including leadership, parents and teachers. The inclusivity of the improvement process at Al-Faisal was further highlighted by the production of instructional videos by the student body. These videos defined the positive behaviours and showed what they look like in the classroom. The ROARS program was implemented in stages through a structured curriculum designed by teacher teams. It took two years to fully implement the program into the existing curriculum.

SUSTAINING FACTORS

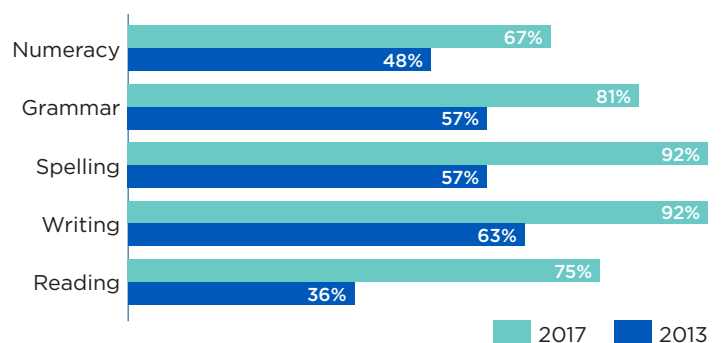
The improvement plans for the coming years will continue to build on the focus areas of literacy, numeracy and positive behaviour for learning. Building on the effective pedagogy of their English literacy programs, Al-Faisal is also in the later stages of developing a synthetic phonics approach to the teaching of the Arabic language. The college will continue to emphasise the importance of staff ownership of the improvement process and the importance of using data to inform priorities.

The school improvement journey at Al-Faisal College has been sustained over many years by a number of factors. First and foremost is the participation and empowerment of staff across the college. This has been achieved by investing in ongoing professional learning and development. The leadership team has ensured staff have the necessary capacity, knowledge, expertise and ownership of the improvement process. Staff are allowed sufficient time to adopt and embed new knowledge and practices in their own classrooms. The journey has also been sustained through the skilful, unified leadership of the college executive and the inclusive, coherent, contextually based process that has evolved over time. The final factor in sustaining improvement over so many years has been the relentless commitment to understanding the learning needs of all students through rigorous analysis of academic and wellbeing data. Ultimately, it is an embedded culture of improvement and a vision of growth in all students that continues to sustain the journey at Al-Faisal College.

“Our teachers said they can see the improvement and see the confidence in the students.”

STUDENT GROWTH IN EXTERNAL STANDARDISED TESTING (NAPLAN)

Number of Year 3 students working at proficient level (top 2 bands)



Thinking further

What aspects of this school's story resonate with you?

What actions might this story prompt for you?

There are five case studies in this school improvement series. What themes or practices emerge that might be relevant in your school context?

1. From 2010-2013 the school participated in a Commonwealth Government funded program which enabled access to AISNSW consultancy support and funds for teacher release to engage with school improvement initiatives.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT CASE STUDY

EMMANUEL ANGLICAN COLLEGE



Emmanuel Anglican College's school improvement journey started with two years of thorough data analysis, research and professional learning. Staff capacity was systematically developed, while the team leading improvement clarified the first key target areas and turned what they had learnt about their students into plans for action. Many decisions were made in the early stages to create time and opportunity for professional learning and collaboration for the creation of new programs that focused on the improvement targets. The principal was specific about the need for a framework that would provide structure for delivering specific improvement initiatives, and this also involved establishing a close connection between improvement targets and the college's strategic plan.

DEVELOPING A TEAM AND A PROCESS TO LEAD IMPROVEMENT

In the first few years, the college was participating in a structured program¹ with access to external expertise, but leadership was always focused on developing internal improvement capacity and enabling staff agency within the college. Sustainability was achieved through the development of a School Improvement Team (SIT) and the process by which the team led improvement throughout the college.

The SIT has evolved into a participatory model of distributed leadership and collaborative expertise. Inclusion of class teachers not currently in formal leadership roles was a deliberate decision on the part of the principal. The aim was to ensure an egalitarian process led by a body that represented multiple voices and could be sustained for the long-term. The unique role and profile of this team nurtured the growth of deep professional respect between the K-6 and 7-12 sections of the college.

"We had a myriad of things we wanted to do and we needed a framework to tie it down into some kind of format that everyone could share."



School Profile

- K-12, co-educational
- Established in 1998
- 680 students
- Regional New South Wales

Prominent features

- Designing and implementing improvement strategy
- Effective school leadership
- Specifying desired outcome improvements

The college has also evolved an improvement process that is key to their success of scaling their improvement strategies. Progression from one improvement project to the next is guided by a process that follows three stages that could be described as research, contextualise and scale. Once the SIT has identified the target areas the following process follows:

- Assemble research demonstrating evidence-based best practice in these areas;
- Improvement target(s) and research are presented to the whole staff through professional learning;
- The new practices are broad at this point and are explored as they apply to the whole school;
- Teachers apply and test new pedagogy and promising practices in the classroom;
- Staff scale and contextualise the initiatives to specific areas of the curriculum and with different cohorts of students;
- Staff measure impact on student growth and the target areas.

The final stage of the improvement process is a phase of informed adjustment and consolidation, led by middle leadership, who at this point take over leadership of the improvement initiatives. It is during this stage that new practices are refined and embedded. This is done through ongoing professional learning, departmental collaboration, classroom observations and individual staff learning goals.

It is important to note each cycle of improvement planning and implementation builds on previous cycles. The improvement process at Emmanuel Anglican College is carefully structured and managed by the SIT, who lead the implementation of plans term by term and review progress. This team also provides a double feedback loop through their close working relationship with leadership and classroom teachers. The team leads implementation and collects feedback and evaluates impact. Senior leadership continues to carry the responsibility of forecasting future improvement areas and strategic planning.

“Success is a great breeder of interest and the staff can see that there’s been explicit, real and meaningful changes in the students’ performance.”

WHAT HAPPENED IN THE CLASSROOM, AS A RESULT OF THE IMPROVEMENT PROCESS?

In 2015, two targets were identified: literacy (writing) and formative assessment. Both were targets for the entire school but the improvement process allowed for different approaches in different contexts. Staff were challenged to address the goal of providing structured, explicit teaching in the area of writing, regardless of subject area. Further investigation of formative assessment led to exploration of assessment for learning and as learning, feedback, differentiated curriculum and the impact of explicit literacy strategies on students’ capacity to tackle assessments.

“What I’ve seen is staff becoming really empowered to drive education forward!”

A third target area was launched in 2017 and involved the introduction of a thinking curriculum and practices based on mindset research. Improvement strategies were introduced across the College.

“...sharing the voice and opinions of staff is really important when you’re trying to get ownership of a school improvement initiative.”

WHERE TO NEXT?

The college is ready to embark on a new cycle of planning, and the next improvement area will focus on building teacher confidence in using data to inform their practice. The School Improvement Team will continue to play an important role in sharpening this focus. The college’s experience highlighted the role this team plays in developing strategic professional learning to equip staff to identify key targets in the area of student performance and growth. Emmanuel Anglican College is now confident that an analytical approach to data enables the desired growth in student performance across the college.

Thinking further

What aspects of this school’s story resonate with you?

What actions might this story prompt for you?

There are five case studies in this school improvement series. What themes or practices emerge that might be relevant in your school context?



1. From 2016-2017 the school participated in a Commonwealth Government funded program which enabled access to AISNSW consultancy support and funds for teacher release to engage with school improvement initiatives.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT CASE STUDY

HURSTVILLE ADVENTIST SCHOOL



In 2013, Hurstville Adventist School was an established Kindergarten-Year 6 school aspiring to improve student outcomes. The desire was to develop innovative practice and use a strategic improvement plan that would move every student forward. The development of an improvement framework by the Adventist Schools¹ was starting the pointing for Hurstville's journey. This framework was a mechanism for driving professional conversations and using evidence-based practice to respond to points of need in student performance. Analysis of external and internal data added the evidence and direction needed. In addition to the framework, participation in funded programs¹ through AISNSW provided staff with specific experiences of improving student learning outcomes through structured programs.

"... we make professional learning very intentional and very deep and by doing that, staff members really buy into what we are doing..."

BUILDING TEAMS TO LEAD AND EMBED IMPROVEMENT

Leadership of improvement came from senior leadership and through the staff. The vision was simple: to lift the performance of every student. To achieve the necessary improvement, capacity was built through two structures of that unified the small staff and developed specific improvement processes.

"... to ensure that staff engage in school improvement it was crucial that staff were involved from the beginning in the data gathering and data analysis process..."

Staff from across the school were encouraged to contribute to the development of strategies that would address priority areas. Teams, or guiding coalitions as they were called, took responsibility for one of the priority areas each and focused on providing professional learning and action plans for implementation of new programs and approaches. The guiding coalition teams unified the staff and fostered a strong sense of professional ownership across the school. The teams created a vertical model of collaboration and ensured annual improvement priorities would be implemented across the school and in ways that were appropriate to every class. These teams demonstrate that the strengths of a small school were agility and a capacity to include every voice.

Creating opportunity to develop collaborative, reflective professional practice was important. The guiding coalition teams provided strong direction in the priority areas but senior leadership also wanted to ensure staff were able to effectively implement their professional learning and improvement strategies within individual classroom contexts. This led to a second horizontal layer of collaboration through the creation of professional learning communities (PLC teams). These teams made it possible for staff to work closely with teachers in the same section of the school. The PLC teams share and refine new

School Profile

- P-6, co-educational
- Established in 1935
- 200 students
- Metropolitan Sydney (NSW)

Prominent features

- Fostering a shared vision
- Cultivating a culture of improvement

classroom practices that respond to the improvement priority areas for all the different ages of students.

The guiding coalitions and professional learning teams fostered a culture that enabled, authorised and inspired the teachers to act on behalf of all the students and to strive for innovation within their classrooms. The guiding coalition teams focused on annual initiatives and developed a shared understanding of "what this looks like in our school". PLC teams focused on what was practical and was needed to achieve improvement initiatives. Lighthouse classrooms were encouraged to pilot and share new practices. Collective improvement and innovation were key to the work of the professional learning community teams. All staff were provided with opportunities to access:

- student-focused, high impact practices
- continuous professional conversations with colleagues and leadership
- structured time for collaborating in professional learning teams
- peer observations and feedback.

WHAT HAPPENED IN THE CLASSROOM?

In 2018 formative assessment with protocols for giving effective feedback was a key improvement initiative. This continues to be a focus in all classes, along with positive behaviour for learning, writing, science/technology and wellbeing. The guiding coalition teams continue to work on these from a whole school perspective, whilst the PLC teams focus on specific classroom implementation.

“...professional community learning teams help to transfer professional learning through to classroom practice...”

Early in the improvement journey, the school was involved in an externally funded literacy and numeracy project targeting K-2 students. When this project ended these priority areas of literacy and numeracy moved into a whole school improvement focus. Explicit instruction in these core areas is now being embedded beyond K-2 through the structured programs, drills and thinking routines. A new shared language of learning and positive behaviours for learning in classrooms is evident in the classrooms throughout the school.

WHERE TO NEXT?

Hurstville Adventist School has demonstrated the power of a small staff who developed great collective strength. Student progress and growth as learners is firmly at the centre the school's core work. The improvement processes and collaborative frameworks provided by the guiding coalitions and PLC teams ensure improvement is experienced across the entire school. It is also important to recognise that within the structured process there

is scope and encouragement for individual innovation by students and staff. The new culture of learning at Hurstville Adventist School has led to the expectation that all pedagogies and classroom programs will have demonstrated positive, measurable impact on student learning, will be actively shared with others, and that best practice becomes the common practice in all classrooms.



Thinking further

What aspects of this school's story resonate with you?

What actions might this story prompt for you?

There are five case studies in this school improvement series. What themes or practices emerge that might be relevant in your school context?



1. From 2013-14 the school participated in a Commonwealth Government funded program which enabled access to AISNSW consultancy support and funds for teacher release to engage with school improvement initiatives. The school was also part of Quality Adventist Schools project that developed a framework for school review and improvement initiatives. Adventist Schools Australia supports 48 school campuses and 14,000 students across Australia.

St Philip's Christian College became involved in school improvement through a structured program in 2014¹. The program gave the college an opportunity to develop a process that would provide focus, structure and criteria for selecting improvement targets. This process would enable the college to work on high-impact initiatives and strategically develop excellence in a select number of areas. Through the deliberate use of evidence and data sets, the college was able to identify their priorities. By 2016, the college had developed their own school improvement process and have continued to apply it with ongoing success.

"We have this desire to strive for excellence in everything that we do. The problem with that, is if you strive for excellence in everything you can actually end up with excellence in nothing..."

DEVELOPING A ROBUST SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS

The school improvement process brought cohesion, consolidation and focus to an extensive range of research-based practices and innovative programs. Prior to 2014, the introduction of too many new practices and ideas had created 'change fatigue'. College leadership wanted to understand how to select the best of these and embed them as productive practices throughout the college. They achieved this through five key aspects of their improvement process:

- Senior leadership searches the data and has a thorough knowledge of how new practices work. Convergence of school improvement initiatives through a few evidence-based lenses such as coherence and consolidation;
- Collaborative project teams with specific improvement goals and a focus on decision-making based on student data and contextual information gathered from myriad sources;
- Planned, rigorous professional learning based on current research — build teacher knowledge and capacity with a view to agency;
- An explicit plan for implementation and ongoing support of teachers in the classroom;
- An 'ongoing project' phase that is led by middle leadership and classroom teachers that ensures excellent practice is developed and embedded.

In the early stages of the school improvement journey, senior leadership found the support of an expert was critical. This outside voice was important for identifying the existing culture and the college's approach to change. Senior leadership then adopted a distributed leadership approach, which allowed for a greater number of teachers to be involved the improvement process, thus empowering and engaging staff. Change became contextualised and more measured in pace and the range of initiatives was narrowed.

School Profile

- K-12, co-educational
- Established in 1982
- 1,250 students
- Regional New South Wales

Prominent features

- Effective school leadership
- Specifying desired improvement outcomes
- Identifying drivers for improvement
- Reflecting on the improvement process

"I think its important to look at school improvement through a variety of lenses ... when we bring together a variety of perspectives we get a more clear picture of what it is that were dealing with and what it is that we want to achieve."

WHAT WERE THE PRIORITIES?

The college had always been well known for change and growth, but in recent years there was recognition that change and initiatives had not necessarily generated the desired impact. Rather than abandoning all previous ideas, leadership chose three of the most successfully embedded or most promising initiatives with a view to implementing or reframing them through the new improvement process.

This approach led to the development of a dynamic project-based learning curriculum for the middle years and design of new learning facilities. The college also developed a *Whole of Life Framework* curriculum that encompasses the college values, student learning intentions and core aspects of student wellbeing.

“School improvement is about choice, making choices about where you’ll go next and what you’ll attend to...”

WHAT HAPPENED IN THE CLASSROOM?

Data revealed a desire for diverse, non-traditional pathways for students and for further development of the cultural distinctiveness of the college. The educational purpose of the three sub-school structure has been strengthened as a supportive structure for student well-being and creating meaningful community. The college has assigned curriculum programming and development to a more traditional primary and secondary model that overlays the sub-schools. Project-based learning has also become integral to innovating the Years 2 – 10 curriculum.

WHAT CARRIES THE PROCESS FORWARD?

The St Philip’s Christian College story is one of bringing order and process to an existing culture of innovation and improvement. The college did not lack a heart for change nor did it lack interest in innovative practice. However, it did lack processes for embedding excellence and leading change that would have a defined, measurable impact on student learning and achievement. As a large school, the college demonstrates that school improvement can occur in a complex context with many stakeholders and from within an established culture.

The school improvement process provides an effective way of monitoring all improvement plans and sharpens the focus on the target outcomes for students, which is crucial in a large organisation. The process also ensures one success generates the groundwork necessary for subsequent improvement, thereby ensuring continuity and cumulative impact of each plan.

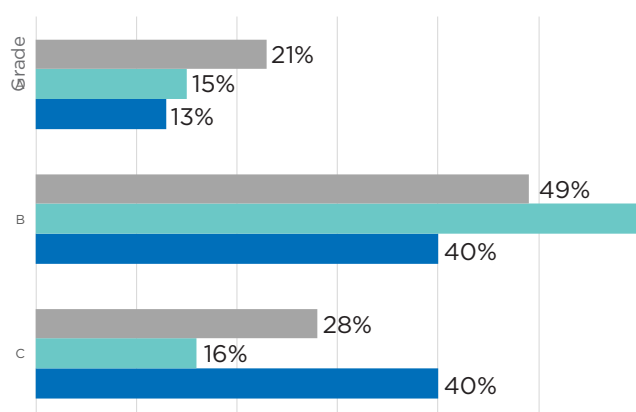
“We made the decision not to engage with change just for the sake of change, but to be very strategic and intentional...”

School improvement has become a cultural dynamic at St Philip’s. It is an ongoing journey of high capacity, deep learning and development that is underpinned by unified, capable leadership. Senior leadership recognises the challenges of bringing change and improvement into a large, complex school environment. The school improvement team has learnt to simplify plans and rely on the triangulation of data to inform strategies.

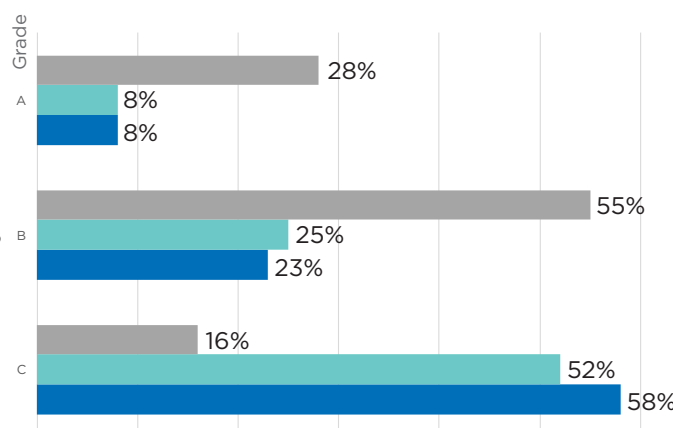
St Philip’s story is one of simplifying and sharpening focus with a keen eye for bringing positive impact to whole school. It is also a story of using their own improvement processes to enhance existing initiatives that are flourishing or are not generating specific impact as intended. The process gives these practices and approaches a structured opportunity to be evaluated for inclusion in the college’s strategic planning.

COMPARISON OF YEAR 10 GRADES FROM 2016 TO 2018

History



Geography



2018 2017 2016

Thinking further

What aspects of this school’s story resonate with you?

What actions might this story prompt for you?

There are five case studies in this school improvement series. What themes or practices emerge that might be relevant in your school context?

1. From 2014-2016 the school participated in a Commonwealth Government funded program which enabled access to AISNSW consultancy support and funds for teacher release to engage with school improvement initiatives.

The school improvement journey for Lakes Grammar – An Anglican School started when they noticed their students had not been achieving as well as the staff thought they could and external testing results supported this view. Analysis of Higher School Certificate and external literacy/numeracy (NAPLAN) test results revealed their students needed to be better equipped with higher order thinking skills and standardised testing was indicating weakness in core literacy and numeracy skills. External testing was triangulated with internal performance data to confirm this analysis. At this point, the school was unsure which strategies might have the most impact in the areas of greatest need. So in 2015, the school joined an AISNSW school improvement program¹, starting a highly successful engagement with improvement initiatives.

“...visible leadership is very important when you are trying to create a culture of change...”

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT IS A CULTURE NOT A PROGRAM

The senior leadership team recognised an existing culture of low expectations, which meant students were coasting. There was an inconsistency in standards, what constituted high level performance and how to achieve it. It was a slow-burn trigger for action. A funded program through AISNSW proved to be the perfect opportunity to act on this concern and to focus on change through improvement.

Over four years, senior leadership recalibrated the learning culture with careful attention to syllabus outcomes and detailed understanding of student performance and measures of growth. By rigorously analysing school data and implementing evidence-based improvement strategies, the leadership team moved the school from reliance on rigid programs to a dynamic process that placed a focus on the students as learners, using learning outcomes and analysing student progress. The emphasis on improvement led to a transformation of staff from sceptical to engaged, as they made changes to pedagogy and practice by working with specific goals that targeted student performance and individual gains in learning.

“A really difficult part of our journey was at the start really, because we were introducing significant change, asking people to change what they do.”

The improvement process required strong leadership and significant investment of time. The first year was dedicated to intensive research, preparing the groundwork for significant change and planning by senior executive. They tackled the difficult conversations and practical obstacles that come with the introduction of new strategies. There was complete awareness of the significant cultural shift that was occurring. School leadership developed the capacity to shift between a

School Profile

- K-12, co-educational
- Established in 2004
- 915 students
- Regional New South Wales

Prominent features

- Cultivating a culture of improvement
- Effective school leadership
- Designing and implementing an improvement strategy
- Identifying drivers of improvement

range of leadership styles throughout the improvement process. Transformational leadership was instrumental in creating a shared vision and aligning change throughout the school. Instructional leadership was essential for building professional capacity and developing stronger classroom practice, whilst adaptive leadership approaches tackled challenges and obstacles.

Over time, the leadership team were able to identify drivers of improvement at Lakes Grammar:

- Many teachers were ready and wanted to change the prevailing culture but were unsure how to take the first step
- Steady, consistent, courageous senior leadership were supported by middle leaders, thus enabling leadership through the difficult times of change and implementation
- Commitment to persevere until positive impact became evident and approaches were validated by the progress made
- A focus on changing culture by emphasising it was a whole-school challenge that required a solution that was supported by everyone
- Access to external resources and expert knowledge in the initial phases

WHAT HAPPENED IN THE CLASSROOM?

For the junior school, reading comprehension was the starting point, alongside the robust implementation of a new English syllabus. An approach called Lesson Study Cycle provided structure and a shared process. Staff worked together in the classroom, testing and refining new approaches. Thinking routines were introduced and staff began to implement a variety of resources. The collaborative nature of this methodology broke down silos whilst building individuals' professional agency. In the senior school, the focus was on literacy, feedback and higher-order thinking skills across all subject areas. Senior college leadership worked directly with middle leaders to design specific application of new practices in the classroom. Through a system of coaching, which involved peer observations and follow-up professional conversations, teachers developed new evidence-based practices in their classrooms.

Key to keeping the momentum going once the improvement process had started was working closely with staff and developing the necessary professional culture. The first step was recognising resistance and focusing on teacher consistency in a range of areas, such as judgement around standards and student progress. By starting with data, student progress was placed at the centre of improvement planning. Professional learning focused on supplying staff with a toolbox of explicit strategies for making a difference in the areas that data revealed as points of need. The introduction of learning coaches for the staff was a critical and effective strategy.

A process of identifying gaps in students' learning developed over time. Once staff identified a gap they adopt the following approach:

- research current evidence-based pedagogy and learning theory;

- select a promising practice;
- trial it in the classroom with the students;
- evaluate its impact with support from the learning coach and head teacher before refining the successful aspects of each practice.

WHAT DID THE SCHOOL LEARN ABOUT SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT?

Since 2015, the school has created new leadership positions and additional roles that focus specifically on the quality of teaching and learning. This is a deliberate strategy for supporting the direction improvement is taking and a recognition that it is crucial to develop and enable all staff. The process of coaching is being scaled across the school, with heads of departments being trained as coaches.

Of many lessons senior leadership learnt from the experience of school improvement, two key ones were:

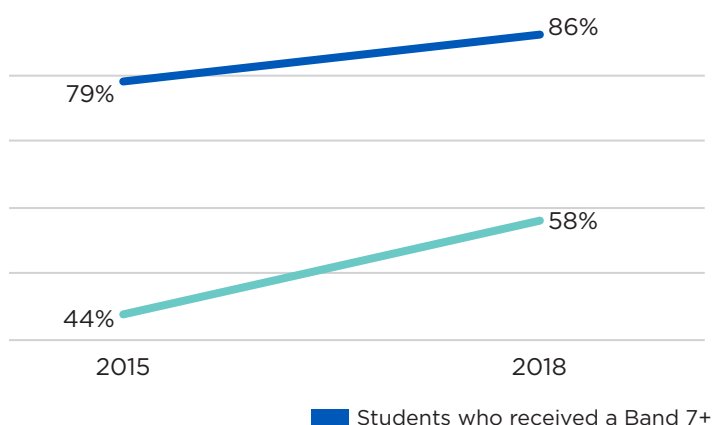
- Providing teachers with time to collaborate and learn together is essential;
- Consistency of message and persistency by school leaders over the long term is critical.

Lakes Grammar wanted to shift the achievement curve and ensure every student was experiencing growth. The intention had always been to build a culture of continuous improvement.

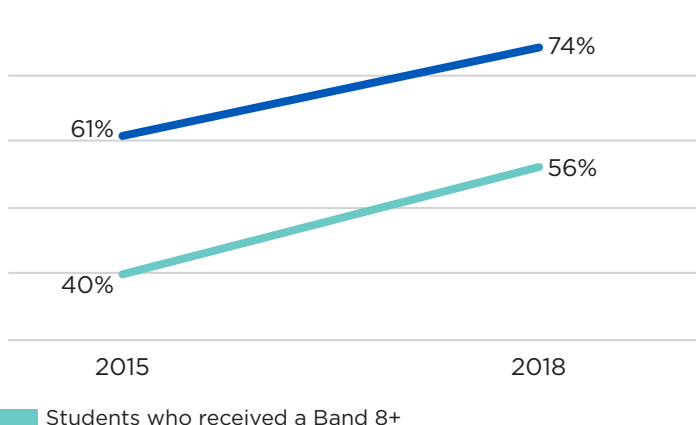
School improvement has involved shifting the focus from rigid to dynamic programs, from data as records to data as evidence, from isolated practice to collaborative professional learning that guides and informs the next step in every classroom, and most importantly, improvement has shifted the focus from undifferentiated programs to growth and progress of each student.

STUDENT GROWTH IN EXTERNAL STANDARDISED TESTING (NAPLAN)

Reading Results Year 9



Writing Results Year 9



Thinking further

What aspects of this school's story resonate with you?

What actions might this story prompt for you?

There are five case studies in this school improvement series. What themes or practices emerge that might be relevant in your school context?

1. From 2015-17 the school participated in a Commonwealth Government funded program which enabled access to AISNSW consultancy support and funds for teacher release to engage with school improvement initiatives.