

School renewal and improvement report

informed by TCS Quadrennial School Review

St Ursula's College, Toowoomba



Contents

Introduction	3
Methodology	4
Purposes	4
School Renewal and Improvement (SRI) domains and components.....	4
School context.....	5
Findings and improvements strategies.....	7
Conclusion	18

Introduction

The School Renewal and Improvement framework describes Toowoomba Catholic Schools' (TCS) commitment and approach to progressive, incremental improvement. The framework describes a four-year cycle during which each school community examines its current achievements and performance, consults widely about its aspirations, establishes priorities for the foreseeable future and undertakes regular checks to monitor progress.

To assist the community in this cycle each school undertakes a quadrennial school review, based on the Catholic traditions of renewal and subsidiarity. This review is facilitated by the Toowoomba Catholic Schools Office and provides reliable, up-to-date and timely information to the community to inform strategic planning. The quadrennial school review is one source of data available to the school community to monitor progress and set goals for the future.

The strategic planning process rightly sits with each local school community, which operates within the broader system of Toowoomba Catholic Schools (TCS). Local school strategic planning is complementary to the TCS Strategic Plan. This connection ensures that each school contributes to, and benefits from, the larger system.

This four-year cycle has been the catalyst for significant growth and improvement in staff knowledge and expertise and student learning and achievement in all schools. It is another indicator of the mature and focused professional learning culture which is a feature of Toowoomba Catholic Schools.

Dr Pat Coughlan
Executive Director: Catholic Schools
Diocese of Toowoomba

Methodology

The quadrennial school review was conducted from the 27-30 May 2024 by the review team comprising

- Dr Pat Coughlan, Executive Director: Catholic Schools
- Chris Golightly, Senior Education Leader, Toowoomba Catholic Schools Office
- Angela Travers, Senior Leader: Mission and Identity, Toowoomba Catholic Schools Office
- Liisa Hammond, Principal Assumption College, Warwick

The review consisted of structured interviews with the following school community members.

- Principal
- College leadership team
- teaching and support staff
- students
- parents
- members of the wider community

Purposes

The purposes of the Toowoomba Catholic Schools quadrennial school review are

- a. to engage the school community in a process of self-reflection and continual renewal
- b. to ensure the school review focuses on the quality of teaching and learning
- c. to provide the school community with an opportunity to participate in a thorough reflection on their school's effectiveness
- d. to provide an external team perspective including findings and improvement strategies to affirm and improve teaching and learning.

School Renewal and Improvement (SRI) domains and components

The reference document for the review is the Toowoomba Catholic Schools (TCS) School Renewal and Improvement Framework. The five SRI domains from the Framework provide the structure for the review and future planning.

Domain 1 Engaged students, learning

The school is driven by a deep belief that every student is capable of successful learning. A high priority is given to building and maintaining positive and caring relationships between staff, students and parents. There is a strong collegial culture of mutual trust and support among teachers and school leaders and parents are treated as partners in the promotion of student learning and wellbeing. The school works to maintain a learning environment that is safe, respectful, tolerant, inclusive and that promotes intellectual rigour. There is a focus on evidence-based practice.

Domain 2 Being distinctively Catholic

The school explicitly operates as a Catholic school, with a distinctive Catholic identity. Staff, students, and parents/carers share in the narrative and charism which encompasses the school and so education about its ongoing story involves all in the school's community. In collaboration and partnership with families and parishes, the school prepares young people to live as Christians in the world. The Catholic identity of the school enables it to be an instrument of the evangelising

mission of the Church. There is an expectation that Religious Education will engage students in thinking about their own spiritual development. The Catholic tradition of valuing academic learning is clearly present in the school, including in Religious Education, which is taught with similar rigour to all other subjects.

Domain 3 Using resources wisely

The school applies its resources (staff, time, expertise, funds, facilities, materials) in a targeted manner to meet the learning and wellbeing needs of all students. It has school-wide policies, practices and programs in place to assist in identifying and addressing student needs. Flexible structures and processes enable the school to respond appropriately to the needs of individual learners.

Domain 4 Valuing our people

All staff are valued as the single most influential factor on the success of students at the College. Staff are knowledgeable about college-wide approaches, programs and expectations and supported in practical ways to develop and strengthen capabilities to be the best at what they do. Staff are supported to integrate high impact teaching strategies and personalised learning approaches which enhance student voice, choice and agency in every lesson and classroom. There is a strong sense of confidence and purpose in the way people go about their work and a genuine commitment to the College's Strategic Plan and Annual Action Plan (AAP).

School context

Motto and crest



St Ursula's College
TOOWOOMBA

Vision

Empowering courageous and compassionate young women of integrity to shape the future.

Mission

To contribute responsibly to our own transformation and that of others in society.

School context, history and Catholic identity

St Ursula's College, a Catholic educational and residential community in the Ursuline tradition, is dedicated to the education and care of young women in Years 7-12.

Although St Ursula's College began life in Toowoomba in 1931, the College draws its spirit and tradition from the lived experiences of many people in many continents and across many cultures over 400 hundred years of history.

The story of St Ursula's College is linked in every way with two great stories.

St Ursula's history is grounded in the story of Catholic education that was told dramatically and humbly lived out by Jesus Christ over 2000 years ago.

The St Ursula's story began in the mind and heart of Angela Merici, the woman who founded the Company of St Ursula in 1535 in the city of Brescia in northern Italy. Much of Angela's spirit continues to influence our approach today as we work towards being a place where people are celebrated for their unique giftedness and potential.

In recent years there has been a growing awareness among many Ursuline schools that this network can provide a means of mutual support and development amongst our schools through the sharing of spiritual and intellectual resources. It has also been considered that the international nature of Ursuline schools helps foster an important global awareness in students and staff and an appreciation of other cultures and societies.

Inspired by the life of Christ and the Gospel, our future is hope-filled. A Courageous and Inspiring Future aims to empower our students to be courageous and compassionate young women of integrity in a world that is characterised by change.

Our unique educational model, The Ursuline Way, values relationships, attentiveness to the needs of individuals, understanding people and working in harmony as signs of God's love for every human being. It recognises the importance of transformational learning and individuals moving from dependence to independence and then to interdependence. The Ursuline Way consists of three distinct features that affirm our culture and position our young women to respond to signs of our times.

- A model for living in the world
- A way of learning in the world
- A manner of contributing to the world

Findings and improvements strategies

Domain 1 Engaged students, learning

Focus areas

- assumptions about students' learning capabilities, ranging from those with additional needs or disabilities through to high achievers
- the nature and quality of relationships among the school leadership, staff, students and parents/caregivers
- levels of safety, trust, tolerance, respect and inclusion in the school culture
- the level of collegiality (distinct from congeniality) that is at work in the school culture as it relates to teaching and learning
- the place of academic rigour in student learning and achievement
- the ways in which student and staff wellbeing are addressed
- the value placed on evidence-based practice in pedagogy and behaviour management

Findings

St Ursula's College provides a really good education because of experienced staff and caring for every girl to succeed in and out of the classroom. (Staff member)

St Ursula's College is a community firmly grounded in the Ursuline tradition and the witness of Angela Merici. Teaching and learning are purposeful and explicit and inspired by belief in the transformative power of a holistic education responsive to time, culture and needs of the students.

A consistent theme, from all stakeholders, is the recognition and celebration of an experienced and knowledgeable staff group. Senior teachers being actively encouraged and supported to be Confirmers, Endorsers, Moderators and Markers for Queensland Curriculum Assessment Authority (QCAA), is evidence of this depth of experience and subject knowledge.

We have very experienced senior staff. Any students doing senior pathways have highly experienced teachers... staff involvement and their currency of practice are valued. (Staff member)

Teaching and learning experiences are strengthened by a positive rapport with students encouraged through pastoral care, wellbeing classes, and other co-curricular opportunities. Staff, students and families frequently identify the pastoral dimension of the College as a strength with teachers having a working knowledge of the strengths and challenges of their students which provides a useful foundation in curating and designing engaging learning experiences.

The majority of teachers and support staff are approachable, supportive and passionate about teaching. (Student)

Many staff cite the diverse religious, geographic and ethnic backgrounds of students as a real strength of the College. This diversity is complemented by a commitment to differentiated practices grounded in the belief that every student is capable of successful learning regardless of circumstance. Staff indicate a developing expertise in high-impact teaching and trauma-informed practice, specifically in adjustments for neurodivergent students. There is a strong commitment from all staff to provide accessible, engaging and challenging learning experiences for all students, including those with additional requirements. Staff are well-aware of the complexity and added challenge of a diverse enrolment profile and the need to manage this aspect of the College carefully.

My two daughters, who attend St Ursula's, have vastly different needs – St Ursula's caters and provides targeted support for both girls. (Parent)

Differentiation, particularly for neurodiverse students, has improved and the exploration of ways to provide students with the opportunities to show their learning and produce results, has also improved. (Staff member)

For some staff the perceived rigidity of the Australian Curriculum, the Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) and Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) system has impacted on the range of subject offerings.

In contrast, several teachers refer to the alignment of the middle years' curriculum to ACARA, and the comprehensive planning of units and assessment as a strength. Many staff report that access to unit and lesson plans encourages shared classes and opportunities to tailor lessons more closely to the needs of individual students.

The senior curriculum offerings are diverse, with a focus on ensuring viable pathways for all students. Conversations about career and senior studies pathways are being had with students from Year 9. Parents say they are pleased with the knowledge and information provided to them and their daughters, who are likewise excited about their inclusion in choices about future studies. Opportunities to undertake a Certificate course contributing to an ATAR are prompting conversations about best practice for student pathways now and into the future.

St Ursula's College sets up their students for exciting opportunities, seeds are planted early and generate a sense of excitement for senior studies... I love that there is a carrot, that's what they need, conversations about future goals and it is a credit to the teachers who know my daughter so well. (Parent)

The changing demographic of the student population has also contributed to a streamlining of subject offerings. Engagement in Arts subjects has decreased, yet the co-curricular opportunities, such as the musical, are well-supported and celebrated. Students are unanimous in their appreciation of the variety of subject choices provided and the Arts offerings are clearly articulated as a strength of the College.

We looked at different schools, and to be honest I thought we were going to decide on another all girls' school; however, when we walked into the dance studio I knew we weren't going anywhere else. (Parent)

The College is like an art gallery, a celebration of the girls' creativity and talent; it is the first thing I noticed and something that stayed with us after we left. (Parent)

The College is achieving strong results in several of the domains in the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) and consistent performance in the attainment of Australian Tertiary Admission Rank and University Offers. There is a timely focus on student performance in literacy and numeracy and an increased student interest in Specialist Mathematics and Mathematical Methods as viable options for their senior studies.

Staff are able to refer to whole-school initiatives to support student achievement and enhance teacher practice. Implementation of the *FLAIR* pedagogical framework is an ongoing process with several staff indicating that further time is needed for this initiative to mature and take hold across the College. Staff believe it is important that innovative and engaging learning experiences are available and accessible to all students.

Other whole-school initiatives include the Wide Reading Assistance Program (WRAP); the IGNITE program to support and inspire high-performing students, *LearnCo*, and Collins Writing program. According to staff these initiatives are intended to develop and embed common understandings and consistency of standards for all subject areas.

Staff and leadership team members are open to further evaluation of the effectiveness of these initiatives to ensure they are successfully embedded and proficiently practised. This commitment to seek the next level of student potential and teacher capacity is well-supported by Angela Merici's Last Legacy:

If according to times and circumstances the need arises to make new rules or something differently, do it prudently and with good advice..."

According to staff, student behaviour is of a comparatively high standard. The consistent implementation of the College Student Behaviour Plan is raised as an area requiring further discernment.

The College has set the capability of analysing and interpreting data as a professional learning priority. It is important to staff that this includes the capacity to easily access and share data. Current attempts to build staff capability, especially Middle Leaders, is welcomed to bolster confidence in making informed decisions about students and their learning.

Staff recognise the shared expertise by experienced colleagues as being helpful to their engagement with student learning data. Key data sets include

- The Progressive Achievement Testing – Mathematics (Pat-M)
- The Progressive Achievement Testing – Reading (Pat-R)
- The National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) Years 7 and 9
- Queensland Certificate of Education attainment
- Destination Data, including Australian Tertiary Admission Rank and University Offers and completion of Certificate courses.

The College is looking forward to the support of Toowoomba Catholic Schools (TCS) and closer engagement with Sentral and CANVAS as central repositories of student achievement and wellbeing data to inform staff discussions and professional judgements about student learning.

Improvement strategies

- Utilise the knowledge already within the staff group to maximise the effectiveness of differentiated practice and high impact teaching strategies.
- Rationalise the curriculum offerings of the College in the light of demographics, data and interests of students and expertise of staff.
- Evaluate current school-wide teaching and learning approaches to ensure successful embedding and sustainability of practice.
- Continue to refine the College Student Behaviour Plan to ensure consistency in kts application by teachers.
- Develop a plan to maximise the capability of staff to confidently and professionally engage with data sets to improve student learning progress.

Domain 2 Being distinctively Catholic

Focus areas

- the ways the school identifies itself as distinctively Catholic
- how the staff, students and parents/caregivers engage with the Catholic story and heritage, and with the school's particular charism
- the ways in which Christian teachings are made relevant to the lives of the students, staff and parents/caregivers
- the way Religious Education engages students to think critically about their spiritual journey, and how it influences their values and beliefs more generally
- the ways in which Religious Education has comparable status with academic subjects in its pedagogy and assessment
- the place of the Catholic principles of hope and service in the culture of the school
- the ways the links between the Catholic tradition, intellectual curiosity, and academic learning are understood in the school

Findings

Staff and students hold touchstones in high regard – they provide the perfect foundation for all interactions. (Staff member)

The Ursuline Way underpins the teaching, learning, relationships and spirituality of the College. It is supported by three touchstones: building unity through community, every face has a place and courage and compassion every day and in every way. Staff and students spoke of the touchstones as important guides to learning as well as their day-to-day interactions in the life of the College. Students indicate that the continual reference to the touchstones at assembly, in Pastoral Care (PC) lessons and in Religious Education (RE) lessons contribute to the respectful and compassionate environment of the College.

I think it's great that we not only learn about the Catholic religion but also other religions and spiritualities... and I like to go deeper on topics. (Student)

The Year 7-9 RE program follows the approved RE Curriculum program for TCS schools and colleges. Year 10 students study Religion and Ethics (R&E). The Assistant Principal Mission & Identity (APM&I) indicates this is working well and students look forward to then moving into the FACE program. In Year 11 there are four classes of R & E and in Year 12 there are two classes currently who are engaged in the FACE program.

Religion units of work and scope and sequence documents are regularly evaluated and reviewed by the Assistant Principal Mission & Identity (APM&I) to ensure similar rigour and engagement to other subjects. Students indicate a developing sense of empowerment when engaging with RE topics. Students speak of gaining voice and agency as critical influencers in the school and the world.

Five teachers on staff have formal academic qualifications in Religious studies. In recent years staff have participated in supported programs from TCS including online interactive sessions, the TCS Religious Education Accreditation Program (REAP) as well as local professional learning provided by the APM&I. Staff express a desire for additional professional learning in Religious Education and contemporary pedagogical strategies so they can become more confident and competent in teaching Religious Education.

St Ursula's College falls within the geographic area of the Our Lady of Lourdes Parish. On weekends the boarding community celebrates Mass with fellow parishioners. The College has been invited to join the parish liturgy group and clergy from the Cathedral lead College Eucharistic celebrations.

Whole of College gatherings include rituals that cultivate a deep sense of meaning, unity and purpose. The traditions and special rites of passage for Year 12 rituals are recognised and esteemed by the community as valuable and joyous celebrations.

The liturgical life of the college is ritualised through the following celebrations.

- Pastoral Care (PC) Prayer: each PC group begins the school day with prayer.
- Prayer celebrations: all Religious Education classes have a prayer focus for the term and each student experiences various forms of prayer through the units of study.
- College Masses and liturgies: The College celebrates Mass together once each term. The APM&I organises these liturgies in conjunction with the liturgy committee (Sparks) and the chaplain. Sparks is a group of students who meet to assist in the planning, implementation, and celebration of whole school liturgical celebrations. The students are a cross section of the College community from Years 7 -12 who work with the APM&I and chaplain to provide an enriching spiritual element to College life.
- College Assemblies, Year Level Meetings and House Meetings begin with an Acknowledgement of Country and prayer.
- Staff Prayer happens weekly and staff members are rostered to lead this prayer.
- The College prayer was written by the Service and Faith Captain in 2021 as a way of connecting the community together.

The Years 7-12 retreat program is comprehensive and focuses on the understanding of self, relationships and tapping into each student's spirituality. The aim of the retreat program is to invite students into a personal relationship with God through guided prayer and reflection times. The contribution of every student is valued and encouraged. Students generally report that the retreat programs are engaging and a chance to focus on personal wellbeing and spirituality.

Serviam is our motto but our girls go above and beyond. (Staff member)

I hope we don't lose touch with the heritage of our tradition and alumni, we have to balance strong tradition with going forward. (Student)

The Ursuline charism is proudly spoken of by staff and students. Serviam is the most referred-to distinctive feature of the College, It is evident that there is a diversity of understandings as to its meaning and relevance among the students.

The values of the College: - serve, courage, compassion, justice and respect - are not as evident in the conversations from stakeholders. Furthermore, the linking of the charism to the story and example of Jesus and Catholic teachings is not clearly expressed by students, staff and parents at this stage.

Interpreting the Ursuline charism in a contemporary context can be seen in the examples of the FACE and IGNITE programs which allow students to discover and reinforce their giftedness and passions through service. The plethora of student-led service groups reinforces the practical application of the charism in action.

Growing service learning is a strategic priority in the Strategic Plan 2021-2024. The Faith in Action through Community Engagement program (FACE) has proven to be an engaging and successful service-learning program undertaken by all students completing the Year 10/11 R&E Program. It combines the religious life of the College and course work, providing an enriching student experience and knowledge of the Catholic faith through real-life initiatives. Students speak confidently of the four core elements - Action, Social Justice, Advocacy and Awareness. Students say they enjoy the Year 12 students as teaching assistants in the junior classes, tutoring in the boarding house, coaching sporting teams, making care packs and visiting aged care facilities.

St Ursula's College has a long tradition of student-led service groups working towards service and advocacy within the local and global community, including Protea Place, Pink Ladies, Ursies Insiders, Ursies for Change, Rising Daughters and Care for Cambodia. The College community is strongly supportive of the participation of students in these groups and students willingly share their experiences of service and advocating for justice through these various experiences.

We want to know more about what it means to be an Ursuline school in other parts of the world and how they live the charism. (Student)

The link to the past students and alumni of the College is an area that all stakeholders would like to see strengthened, to learn from real examples of how Ursuline-educated women live the charism in their work and relationships. Students also express the desire to further develop their relationships with Ursuline schools around the world and establish a visitation program with other schools eg New York or the United Kingdom.

Pastoral care groups are so good. We can connect with other students from different levels and the teachers really know us. (Student)

Pastoral Care (PC) groups provide students opportunities to pray together, share their stories, listen and care for one another. Students and staff indicate this is one of the most important and valuable parts of the day.

Formation of staff as to what we are about is important, so they know it's more than just service. Important to have the charism to keep the history alive, and the connection to Catholic beliefs and Catholic social teachings. (Staff member)

The evolving context of our times and the changing nature of learners and their teachers require thoughtful discernment, renewal and recontextualisation of the mission and identity of the College.

The College community is characterised by rich diversity, encompassing students and staff from a multitude of religious backgrounds and those having no particular faith. The review team noted that students and their families experience a warm sense of welcome and care within the College, which actively embodies and upholds the principles of compassion and service.

The College's Catholic identity is prominently reflected through traditional and recontextualised symbols, artwork and spaces. The art on display throughout the College offers a visual invitation for peaceful reflection and dialogue.

Currently, the College delivers at least five hours of spiritual formation per year to ensure that staff are fulfilling their requirements for Accreditation to Teach in a Catholic School. This formation traditionally occurs in the staff professional week in the middle of the year. Topics have included living out the Ursuline charism and connecting the charism with the Gospel values. The dedicated effort to keep touching base with the Ursuline Sisters and inviting them to co-facilitate such formation is appreciated by staff.

Improvement Strategies

- Explore the understanding of a contemporary Catholic identity where the mission is relevant to the educational needs of students, staff and parents now and into the future.
- Deepen the shared understanding of the Ursuline charism, Serviam, and its connection to the Gospel story.
- Explore opportunities to develop and share creative and dialogical contemporary practices in the teaching of RE.
- Encourage and support teachers in their professional learning to teach RE with confidence and deep understanding.

Domain 3 Using resources wisely

Focus areas

- the ways the school applies its resources (staff, time, expertise, funds, facilities, materials) in identifying and targeting the learning and wellbeing needs of students and staff
- the effectiveness of the policies and practices that are in place to implement this in ways that are responsive to the needs of individuals and groups of students
- the level of transparency that enables clarity about the rationale behind resourcing decisions
- the ways resourcing decisions reflect the schools stated strategic priorities

Findings

Staff, students, parents, and other community members highly value and take pride in the culture of St Ursula's College. The College stakeholders recognise the Principal and leadership team as the primary influence in strengthening the culture of the community and defining the aspirational vision for St Ursula's College to be the school of choice for families seeking quality girls' education.

There is widespread acceptance of the College Vision and Mission as collaboratively-developed statements which underpin the ongoing development of the culture of faith, care and excellence. There is universal support for high standards and expectations in all aspects of college life including standard of student uniform wearing and presentation, behaviour and participation in learning by students.

Students demonstrate pride in being an Ursie student and indicate that it is a living expression of faith, modelled by the Principal and the majority of members of the College staff. The touchstones of building unity through community, every face has a place, courage and compassion were referred to by staff and students. Other words to express the culture of St Ursula's College include encouraging, supportive and empowering.

The College offers a wide variety of opportunities in academic pathways and subjects, outreach and social justice programs and continues to encourage greater participation in the Arts.

Parents and students speak highly of the support the students receive from the College staff. Students and parents acknowledge the willingness of staff to give up their time in providing various co-curricular opportunities.

Parents acknowledge the passion and dedication of the College leadership team. Parents are empathetic to the complexities involved in leading the whole College community, especially during this period of transition of governance.

St Ursula's is working towards catering for the needs of an ever-changing College community. Effective strategic leadership has been identified as a pivotal force behind the improvement agenda, with a focus on teamwork as the key during this period of time.

The panel congratulates the College on their 2023 Boarding School of the Year award. This is seen as due recognition of the quality of service that is currently provided by the facility and associated staff. Students report that they thoroughly enjoy the interactions with boarding staff. They describe the boarding house as a safe, supportive and inclusive environment.

A shift in the approach in marketing to explicitly reflect the authentic strengths and identity of St Ursula's College is recognised and commended by staff and parents.

Increasing enrolments across the College is seen as a priority, as is the importance of maintaining the current diversity of experience and curriculum offerings and maximising the potential and expertise of current and future staff.

The panel received significant feedback from stakeholders that the current transition period of governance is causing a feeling of unease and concern for some staff members. They are worried about the impact of this current situation on the wellbeing of some of their colleagues.

Strategic planning involves close monitoring of enrolment trends and patterns to ensure sustainability of resourcing levels and stability of curriculum offerings. It is noted that an acute focus on fiscal planning and prudent budgeting is a major focus to assist with future building and plant upgrades to meet the demands of providing a quality product in a highly competitive educational environment.

Staff and parents express concern over staff retention, especially several high performing teachers relocating to other TCS schools and other sectors over the past few years. They are concerned about the impact on continuity of quality teaching programs for students. Staff and parents are aware of the need for successful attraction, recruitment and retention of teachers and enthusiastically anticipate TCS support in alignment with system wide recruitment processes.

Some staff express the view that the current timetable is inequitable. The belief is held that some staff have heavier teaching loads than others in relation to the amount of preparation, marking and reporting responsibilities associated with certain subjects. This is causing workload issues with some teachers and is seen by some to have the potential to affect quality of teaching practice and impact on student learning.

Staff indicate that they are well resourced for their teaching responsibilities. Access to technology and associated capabilities is at times problematic for staff and students. Support from the TCS IS team in the migration of identity and roll-out plan of system wide administrative and learning management systems is greatly appreciated. Given the level of complexities associated with the current College configuration, connectivity issues and ageing hardware, ongoing technical support at the College is identified as an area of need.

There is a general lack of awareness of the financial parameters which influence College resourcing. Staff express an openness to further understand funding processes to provide greater clarity to the rationale and complexity behind the school funding model, main sources of funding, enrolments and budget priorities.

It is evident that the College priorities are reflected in the budget and deliver resourcing to enhance student learning. Further efforts to create greater transparency of budgets and budgeting processes will provide clarity around the 'why' of budget allocations.

Students express concern over the limited access to change room facilities. Students see time spent waiting in line as impacting on their ability to arrive on time to class and enjoy a break at lunch or morning tea.

Expert personnel and resources for students requiring additional or specialist support are highly regarded within the College community. Parents and students praise the level of support and guidance provided by the learning support and College counselling teams.

The future investment and implementation of the new Learning Management System, CANVAS, and student administrative system, Sentral, are seen by staff as a proactive measure to improve communication, student data storage, retrieval and analysis and repository of teaching, learning and assessment plans. Such resourcing will serve to facilitate both individual and collaborative reflection and refinement of quality teaching practices.

Improvement strategies

- Consult with Heads of Faculty to build an agreed consensus among Curriculum Leaders and teachers for expectations regarding centralised planning, adjustments and differentiation for students and an assessment repository in Years 7-12.
- Review effectiveness and sustainability of the current level of subject offerings and associated timetable.
- Explore creative and effective marketing initiatives that explicitly reinforce the better story of St Ursula's College.
- Review current IS infrastructure and systems with the objective of ensuring technology resources cater for contemporary teaching and learning needs and enhance communication among all stakeholders.
- Seek further avenues to provide an opportunity for stakeholders to gain greater understanding of school funding, budgeting process and the rationale behind allocation of resources.

Domain 4 Valuing our people

Focus areas

- assumptions about the potential influence of staff on students' learning and achievement
- the extent to which staff are knowledgeable about school-wide approaches, programs and expectations
- ways in which staff are supported to develop and strengthen their professional capabilities in integrating high impact teaching strategies and personalised learning approaches which enhance student voice, choice and agency
- levels of confidence and purpose in the way people go about their work
- the extent of genuine commitment to the school's direction as outlined in the Strategic Plan.

Findings

Staff, students and parents express an extraordinary level of goodwill, loyalty and pride in the College and its Ursuline tradition. The experience of most staff, students and parents is of a welcoming, supportive, and professional working environment.

Most staff speak passionately about their pride in working at and being associated with the College.

This is a pleasant and professional place to work. (Staff member)

Staff are strong advocates for their subject areas and speak highly of the work of their colleagues. Most staff speak of being a part of an active professional learning community operating within subject and faculty areas. Staff describe isolated 'pockets of excellence' throughout the College suggesting the opportunity for a more strategic approach to capitalise and scale-up the 'pockets' into College-wide excellence. Staff express appreciation for the availability of and encouragement to attend a variety of professional learning opportunities. Many staff cite a desire for a more unified whole-of-College approach to professional learning and pedagogical approaches.

Teaching staff are highly valued and respected by the College leadership team, parents, and students. There is an overwhelming confidence in the care and genuine concern for the welfare of students which is regularly cited as a strength of the College.

Relationships are a clear priority at the College with staff, students and parents consistently sharing that they enjoy coming to the College each day to a community of people who support and nurture them. All community members describe the staff as being committed, high performing and uniformly invested in positive learning and achievement for their students.

Staff express their confidence in the capacity and potential of the College leadership team to move the College to a more strategic footing. There is a real appetite for change in anticipation of the next step for the College. Many staff note an unease about declining enrolment numbers and the risk this poses to the future direction of the College. As a subset of this, most staff raise the enrolment profile of the College as a matter requiring further discernment and clarity.

According to staff and parents, the profile of the school within the community can best be described as 'Toowoomba's best kept secret'. The efforts by staff to promote what the College has to offer and to raise the profile of the College are highly appreciated.

Some staff liken their current experience to 'a period of flux', heightened by the governance transition. Some staff suggest that this is an ideal time for the College to 'regroup' to gain deeper clarity and definition of the College strengths and ensure that these are explicitly known and modelled by all community members. There is an appetite for a plan to unite and inspire the College and to reassure staff and community of a confident future ahead.

Many staff and some parents mention the timeliness and consistency of communication as an area for further attention. Heads of faculty, heads of house and administration staff identify mixed messages and short notice communication from the College leadership team as limiting their capacity to work effectively with their teams. A majority of parents cite receiving accurate and more timely notice of College events and activities as being desirable.

The current Strategic Plan was not referenced in discussions or forums, even when raised by interviewers. Staff, students, and parents recognise the opportune time to jointly create a clear, workable plan to enliven the College spirit and step forward with confidence. Given the opportunity presented by the SRIP, staff are looking forward to their involvement in the design of a new Strategic Plan which will fire the imagination of the community for the future.

Improvement strategies

- Develop and communicate a strategy for the creation of a new College Strategic Plan.
- Evaluate the current enrolment policy in terms of whether it is 'fit for purpose' in the current context.
- Consider the current approach to professional learning and the use of professional learning communities to gain consensus on goals and expectations.
- The College leadership team examine current meeting and communication structures and practices to streamline channels of internal and external communication, so they are more timely and more consistent in their content.

Conclusion

The panel found the School Renewal and Improvement Process review at St Ursula's College to be a timely and worthwhile experience. There is a desire to embark on an authentic growth agenda, focusing on raising the status of academic learning and achievement and lifting the profile of the College in the community to increase enrolments.

There is a collective sense of privilege and pride in the College and its current story and a heightened anticipation of the process leading to the College telling its better story over the next four years.

There is an appetite for change, not an appetite for more. As the College's student numbers grow and a new Strategic Plan is created, the College should work to maintain and nurture the embedded and highly valued cultural expectation so that St Ursula's College will always be a college 'where every face has a place.'

The panel members wish the St Ursula's College community well for the next stage in its journey, where the process to establish a new Strategic Plan, the College's better story, will take shape. The community looks forward to the College continuing to be a shining light in articulating and living its Ursuline values.

With a College-wide focus on furthering achievement levels of students, efficacy amongst staff and a strong and united College leadership team, St Ursula's is well-placed for a strong future.