# Feedback Case Study



## COLLABORATING TO SUPPORT IMPROVED PRACTICE

### BRAY PARK STATE HIGH SCHOOL
BRAY PARK, QLD

**aitsl**
Australian Institute
for Teaching and
School Leadership
Limited

- METROPOLITAN
- GOVERNMENT
- SECONDARY
- ICSEA 976
- 68 TEACHERS
- 754 STUDENTS
- LBOTE 10%
- INDIGENOUS STUDENTS 7%

(Accessed from MySchool - May 2017)

### Identifying a need

A 2014 internal review of Bray Park State High School identified a need to improve the quality of teaching and student outcomes. The school introduced Marzano's Art and Science of Teaching (ASOT) pedagogical framework, which poses ten questions to help teachers engage students and promote high-quality learning. In making feedback an essential part of the learning process, teachers sought to answer key ASOT questions around helping students interact with and deepen their understanding of knowledge.

The school also implemented the strategies of New Pedagogies for Deep Learning (NPDL) – a global partnership that supports the use of digital technology in new teaching methods, including providing high-quality feedback.

> ' The big thing with the feedback is, it's collaborative feedback, so [students] are not only assessing themselves… they're giving other [students] feedback as well. '
>
> Derek Cliff, Teacher

## KEY IMPLEMENTATION PRACTICES

**Professional learning communities (PLCs) meet fortnightly** to discuss student achievement data and matters linked to the school strategic plan, such as introducing new pedagogies.

**Professional learning opportunities targeted to staff need are flagged** by a group of six staff who meet fortnightly. They gather information on staff learning needs through surveys.

**A leadership coach works with the leadership team** to offer advice on coaching colleagues and working towards improvement goals.

## IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

1. **Identified a need** to use data processes to track and monitor student outcomes to identify where improvement was needed.

2. **Started using evidence-based pedagogical approaches** that use formative assessment and quality feedback.

3. **Leveraged and established support structures**, such as professional learning sessions, PLC meetings, observations, walk-throughs and coaching for leadership.

4. **Monitored progress** through data collection, assessment, making necessary changes and reassessing.

## Implementation narrative

Teachers at Bray Park use formative assessment tasks to generate evidence of achievement to better understand their students' learning needs. Where formative assessment reveals gaps in student learning, teachers return to those topics to develop their students' understanding before progressing in the unit.

Students receive feedback, but not their mark, on formative tasks and must respond to that feedback by setting learning goals for improvement. Once goals for improvement have been set, students receive their mark.

Teachers keep records of student achievement on a variety of formative and summative tasks. Students use ASOT proficiency scales to monitor and evaluate their own understanding and growth. Teachers and students have regular feedback discussions to help students set long-term learning goals for each semester.

The school also places a strong focus on collaborative work between students, with peer feedback practices reflecting this. Students are required to detail the tasks they undertook as part of a group, as well as providing feedback to others, which promotes accountability.
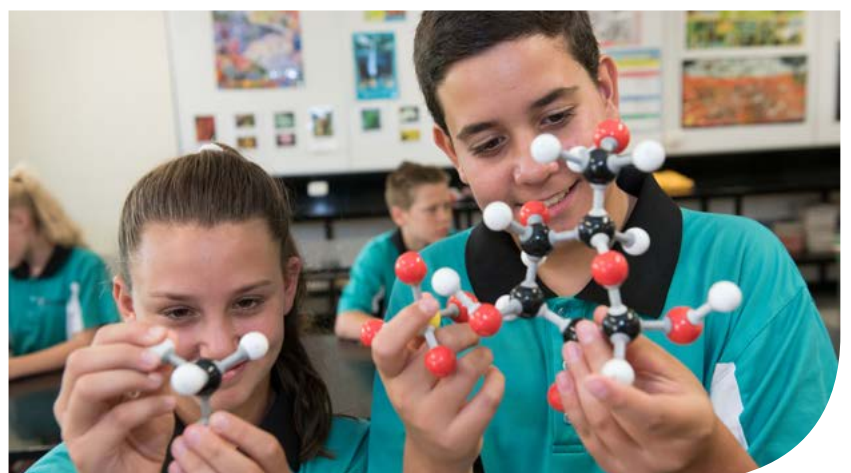
## KEY FEEDBACK PRACTICES

**Using formative assessments** ensures that student learning is not defined solely by summative tasks. Student capability is identified outside exam conditions, which means learning and progress are measured from a range of information.

**Students get feedback before receiving a mark**, and are required to respond to feedback.

**Peer feedback is supported** so that students become proficient in working with success criteria.

**Students are supported to develop research skills** as an element of self-regulated learning, in addition to receiving direct instruction from teachers.

**Students practise peer feedback collaboratively.** Learning these skills helps to ensure self-evaluations and assessments on group tasks are realistic. Students make "I like" and "I wish" statements to identify strengths and areas of improvement to peers.

**Exit tickets enable teachers to check understanding** at the end of lessons. They can then find out whether students have understood the key concepts of the lesson. This means they can return to them in the next lesson if necessary or move on.



Exit tickets are used at Bray Park to check student understanding. Students are told the focus area at the beginning of each lesson. At the end of the lesson, they fill out an exit ticket responding to the focus area. Exit tickets are often post-it notes that students write one or two sentences on to articulate their understanding of the lesson, or answer a question.

Some teachers use online forms rather than paper. Either method gives teachers immediate feedback on whether students have understood the key concepts of the session, so they can revise them if necessary or move on.

To embed the improvement of feedback practices in teacher professional growth, a voluntary group of six teachers meet fortnightly to discuss strategies to assist their colleagues in using learning goals and success criteria with students. They collect information through surveys to determine staff learning needs and where practice can be improved. This in turn informs professional learning opportunities.

## ENABLING CONDITIONS

**Feedback is flagged to teachers** as a key element of best practice through focus area 5.2 of the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers*.

**Teachers undertake informal classroom walk-throughs** to learn more about each other's practice, and provide feedback.

**Formal classroom observations** occur at least once per term for teachers to receive feedback on specific areas they have nominated.

## IMPACT

- Students in the A – C range for English, science and maths have increased from 65% to 85%.

- Student disciplinary absences have reduced from one of the highest in the region, to the lowest.

- The school staff opinion survey shows an increase of staff morale from 40% to 95%.

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) have grown out of the professional learning sessions. These are tied to Bray Park's strategic plan and respond to findings from the analysis of student data.

Five PLCs meet fortnightly to discuss literacy, numeracy, school-wide positive behaviour, and specific priorities relating to junior secondary and senior secondary. PLC meetings have included simulation classes, where teachers trial feedback strategies with other members of staff role-playing students.

Other ways that teachers share effective practice include informal classroom walk-throughs which allow them to seek advice and feedback from their colleagues and learn about each other's teaching. The leadership team also conducts formal classroom observations to monitor implementation of agreed practices.

Teachers may also ask their colleagues to observe their lessons to provide feedback on a specific area of practice. PLCs, walk-throughs and observations support the sharing of successful approaches across faculties, creating greater consistency for students.

'You could walk into any classroom and see the learning goal there and the success criteria there for the students to aim for.'

Marama Harvey, Teacher