National School Improvement Tool (NST)

National School Improvement Tool Review Report

Commendations:

• There is a strong sense of commitment to the College by students, staff and parents. This is evident in the respectful interactions, the support provided by teachers, and in the physical environment. Students and parents hold staff members in high regard.
• The Principal and leadership team have expressed a clear intent to maintain the current high levels of student achievement, well-being, welfare and pastoral care and to find ways to add additional value.
• The Year 12 academic results are excellent, which is a reflection of the strong learning culture evident across the whole College.
• There is a culture in the College where mutual respect and genuine warmth in relationships exists between staff and students.
• The Director of Teaching and Learning is developing a shared vision of teaching and learning with the staff. This vision will reflect the aspirations and professional development sought by the executive staff to deliver College imperatives.
• The introduction and successful implementation of the PYP program is a significant educational step for the College. This adds to the diversity and richness of the College educational program and provides opportunities for consideration of additional programs in the future, which are contemporary and outward looking.
• The breadth of community programs available to students ensures a balanced educational offering and provides for students the opportunities to value social justice and the students’ place in the wider community beyond the College.

Affirmations:

• A designated teaching mentor is leading a peer mentoring and coaching program in the College to assist teachers, to develop and share deep understandings and promote consistency of practice across the College.
• The introduction and development of academic data tracking is providing access to a range of data to inform staff decision-making about student learning.
• The decision to adopt a software package for the purpose of generating the College timetable and associated tasks is a positive approach towards more effective use of resources. This will permit greater flexibility and accuracy in developing the timetable through prudent allocation of resources, particularly teaching staff.

Recommendations:

• It is recommended that the College create and articulate a clear vision for Radford College, by collaboratively developing the school improvement agenda so it will be effective in focusing, narrowing and sharpening whole school attention of core learning priorities. It is important to express this agenda in terms of improvements in measurable student outcomes, with explicit and clear school-wide targets for improvement which are communicated to parents and families, teachers and students, and critical timelines are identified.
• Clarifying line management roles and structures within the College will ensure that line management serves to keep communication and accountability at a high standard, contributing to leadership development.
• The clear position papers on a K-12 pedagogical approaches provide a foundation to extend and embed ideas and methods into daily practice. The College is encouraged to continue this work, which will contribute to the use of common language and understandings K-12, and will provide a focus for targeted professional learning activities.
• A variety of data are already collected by the College, and a tracking system has been developed and implemented, It is recommended that the College continues to build the data culture in the College, where teachers become experts in the analysis of student data and are able to use this analysis as a basis for modifying student instruction. Using short-term data cycles to develop specific targets for improvement at cohort and individual student level will inform and guide teacher planning. A comprehensive data plan would describe the range of data to be collected, timelines, and those responsible for collection and data entry. Associated professional learning for all staff would allow for interrogation of data, and provide clear information supporting differentiation in the classroom for enhanced student learning.
• Leadership structures have changed, and lines of responsibility have been matched to reflect this. Together with further work in clarifying roles, a key process will be communication, and affirming the importance and valuing of all members of staff in a changing environment. The school is encouraged to place a priority on personal recognition for staff, in line with the College’s values, to create a stronger culture of collegiality across the College.
• Consider further examination of existing structures and processes, which identify and establish best practice to ensure optimal student welfare.
• Refine existing processes and procedures in the development of the College’s timetable, with specific regard to the use of a dedicated and appropriate software platform. This will include reviewing the systems in place for determining staffing needs and allocation across the College based on student needs.

National School Improvement Tool (NSIT)