**Background:**
Benarkin SS is Prep - Year 7 primary school with 26 students and is situated 18 kilometres south east of Yarraman. The school is part of the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden National Program. All students are involved in the weekly kitchen garden program. They work in the garden, learning sustainable and organic gardening methods and grow a wide range of seasonal vegetables, fruits and herbs, with produce used by students to prepare nutritious meals in the school kitchen. The school is well supported by the wider community.

**Commendations:**
- There has been significant improvement since the last Teaching and Learning Audit in the implementation of An Explicit Improvement Agenda. The school improvement agenda has been effective in focusing the whole school's attention on core priority of explicit teaching and learning.
- The school has creatively deployed and maximised school and community resources to implement a range of initiatives to enhance teaching and learning for all students, including the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program and its associated teaching and learning activities.
- The school effectively implements School Wide Positive Behaviour Support for students by ensuring that disruptive behaviour and bullying are dealt with promptly. Proactive strategies have been highly effective in creating a caring and learning environment. The school has clear expectations for how students should behave and interact with one another. In each of the classrooms the students were actively engaged in learning.
- A strong collegial culture has been established. School leaders and teachers work together in a mutually supportive way and there is a strong sense of belonging and pride in the school.
- The use of Every Day Counts attendance strategy and the role the learning engagement activities play in supporting student attendance is a key feature of the schools improvement agenda.

**Affirmations**
- The school has developed processes for identifying student learning needs and applies available resources to meet these needs through structured support in classrooms by staff members.
- The school has successfully undertaken the implementation of the Australian Curriculum in English, mathematics and science. The curriculum plan provides a context for delivering the required curriculum as detailed in the QCAR Framework.
- The school has in place a Professional Learning Plan and associated budget to support local and systemic priorities.

**Recommendations:**
- Encourage teachers to use data on a regular basis to monitor the effectiveness of their teaching and to reflect on classroom and school practices. Support teachers to develop a deep and sophisticated understanding and use of a range of data.
- Enhance opportunities for teachers to have professional conversations around the vertical alignment of the curriculum so that there is continuity and progression of learning across the years of schooling, with teaching in each year building onto and extending learning in previous years. This should include a focus ensuring higher order thinking skills are embedded across all curriculum areas and year levels.
- Sharpen the school's explicit improvement agenda by clarifying and aligning pedagogical practices expected for teaching and learning across the whole school. Support this with clear targets and timelines. This will enhance the quality teaching already in place and support and bring more clarity to ‘the how’ of teaching and learning at Benarkin SS.
- Implement whole of school processes enabling school leaders and teachers to visit classrooms and observe teaching. This will allow staff members to learn from others and to provide feedback as part of a self-reflective culture focused on improving classroom teaching. Further enhance this by establishing arrangements for mentoring and coaching of staff members.
- Further develop differentiation by ensuring all teachers’ planning records how the different needs of individual students are addressed and how multiple opportunities to learn are provided. Target models of differentiation in order to build and enhance knowledge of strategies for teachers. This will enhance a whole school approach to improving student achievement.