

# **Department for Education**

## **External School Review**

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

### **Report for Newbery Park Primary School**

Conducted in August 2019



## Review details

Our education system aspires to become the best in Australia by seeking growth for every student, in every class and in every school.

The purpose of the External School Review (ESR) is to support schools to raise achievement, sustain high performance and to provide quality assurance to build and sustain public confidence in government schools.

The External School Review framework is referenced throughout all stages of the ESR process.

This report outlines aspects of the school's performance verified through the review process according to the framework. It does not document every aspect of the school's processes, programs and outcomes.

We acknowledge the support and cooperation provided by the staff and school community. While not all review processes, artefacts and comments are documented here, they have all been considered and contribute to the development and directions of this report.

This review was conducted by Phil Garner, Review Officer of the department's Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate and Peter O'Sullivan, Review Principal.

## Review Process

The following processes were used to gather evidence relevant to the lines of inquiry:

- Presentation from the principal
- Class visits
- Attendance at staff meeting
- Document analysis
- Scan of Aboriginal Education Strategy implementation
- Discussions with:
  - Governing Council representatives
  - Leaders
  - Parent groups
  - School Support Officers (SSOs)
  - Student groups
  - Teachers

## School context

Newbery Park Primary School caters for children from reception to year 7, and is situated 410kms from the Adelaide CBD. The enrolment in 2019 is 105 students. Enrolment at the time of the previous review was 109.

The school has an ICSEA score of 937, and is classified as Category 2 on the Department for Education Index of Educational Disadvantage.

The school population includes 6% Aboriginal students, 12% students with disabilities, no students with English as an additional language or dialect (EALD) background, 8 children/young people in care and 69% of families eligible for School Card assistance.

The school leadership team consists of a principal in the 6<sup>th</sup> year of their tenure at the school. The school has a senior leader (0.4FTE) for teaching and learning.

## The previous ESR or OTE directions were:

- Direction 1** Improve the growth of student achievement by providing regular time and leadership to support teachers to analyse data, monitor growth and identify teaching points.
- Direction 2** Support, stretch and challenge all students by differentiating the curriculum and providing planned learning opportunities in each classroom that cater for the varied needs of all students.
- Direction 3** Increase the number of students achieving the SEA by providing structured opportunities for teaching teams to plan together and use consistent, agreed approaches to meet the needs of learners in each cohort.
- Direction 4** Prioritise improvement strategies to provide a sequential and easily understood improvement agenda that can be evaluated regularly in terms of student progress.
- Direction 5** Ensure ongoing induction, professional learning and performance development processes build capacity of all staff to consistently implement agreed approaches.

### What impact has the implementation of previous directions had on school improvement?

#### Direction 1

The school has designed and implemented a comprehensive analysis of student achievement data that is used effectively to identify and track student progress in their learning. Teachers effectively utilise achievement data to inform learning design, curriculum delivery and differentiated student learning programs.

#### Direction 2

The development of a whole-school approach to learning design has supported teachers in providing scaffolded learning with multiple entry and exit points that cater for the individual learning needs of students. The inclusion of learning intentions, success criteria and goal setting in the learning process is empowering students to take responsibility for their own learning.

### **Direction 3**

The implementation of school wide initiatives such as the use of Chrome devices and a whole-school focus on Natural Maths has been the catalyst for consistent learning practices and a common learning language across the school. Professional collaboration is evident with teachers valuing opportunities to co-design and share their learning. However, while the number of year 3 students achieving the Department for Education Standard of Education Achievement (SEA) in reading and numeracy has increased, the years 5 and 7 student achievement has remained relatively stable.

### **Direction 4**

Clear and sequential processes and strategies have been developed over time that focus on the strategic direction for school improvement. The current Site Improvement Plan (SIP) has the focus of improving student achievement in mathematics and writing.

### **Direction 5**

Professional Development program (PDP) processes are in place in the school with relevant professional learning opportunities available to augment and build the professional capacity of teachers. While induction processes are in place to assist teachers' transition into the site with confidence and ease, it is important to continue to assess their effectiveness on an individual basis.

## **Lines of inquiry**

### **EFFECTIVE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING**

#### ***How effectively does the school use improvement planning processes to raise student achievement***

There is evidence of staff collaboration in the development of the SIP with consideration given to teacher accountability and the building of teacher capacity. Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) have been introduced providing teachers with opportunities to collaborate, reflect on practise and improve the quality of teaching and learning. Collaboration between teachers in similar year levels is leading to greater consistency of classroom practice and individual teacher PDP plans reflect the directions of the school, providing teachers with the links between SIP and their professional learning.

However, the SIP Challenges of Practice, associated actions and success criteria are not providing enough clarity on how building teacher capacity will occur, who is responsible or how it will explicitly influence improvement in student learning. As a result, it is difficult for staff to adequately review and track progress towards the meeting the goals of success criteria.

Yearly External School Reviews over the past three years have led to a strategic emphasis on developing whole-school policies and procedures, providing documented evidence of data analysis, learning design, planning, assessment and reporting with greater concentration on accountability, compliance and justification. The school is now in a position to review and evaluate the SIP ensuring it has an explicit focus on teaching and learning, building the capacity of teachers and improving student achievement.

**Direction 1 Collaboratively review the Site Improvement Plan Challenges of Practice, actions and success criteria to provide absolute clarity and a clear line of sight between goals and success criteria, building teacher capacity and responsibilities with a focus on improvement in student learning.**

## EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND STUDENT LEARNING

### *How effectively are teachers using evidence-based pedagogical practices that engage and challenge all learners?*

Teachers analyse student achievement data to effectively identify the next steps in student learning and to support students with targeted intervention strategies.

The use of learning intentions and success criteria is an embedded practice across the school. Students are clearly able to articulate the learning intentions and their importance in the learning cycle. The use of success criteria is assisting students in understanding the requirements of learning and provides a visual challenge leading to greater student involvement and ownership of their learning. Personal goal setting is a fully embedded practice across the school with students reporting greater engagement, motivation and with a better understanding of their learning. Students could clearly articulate Natural Maths terminology, the learning processes and the consistent structure of math lessons with most students in the middle and upper primary years having a clear understanding about writing genres and their features.

Students receive feedback on their learning from a variety of sources including teacher and peer assessment. However, formative assessment is not an embedded practice across the school with the majority of feedback being that of affirmation. The panel evidenced effective teaching across the school with high levels of differentiation.

The panel met with students who exhibited positive engagement with their learning tasks, however the level of challenge they are experiencing in some areas of the curriculum will need to be reviewed to ensure students are continually challenged to aspire and achieve.

The school has developed a comprehensive reporting process that enables parents to receive termly portfolios on their children's achievements across all subjects. These are also followed up with individual parent/student three-way conferences each term. While the staff value the importance of robust reporting, this process is extremely time intensive and raises questions regarding its effect on improving student learning.

**Direction 2** To further enhance student engagement and challenge in their own learning and improve student outcomes, collaboratively design and implement a consistent whole-school understanding and approach to effective formative feedback.

**Direction 3** To ensure the assessment and reporting process have high strategic value in improving student outcomes, collaboratively review the parent reporting process ensuring that the time and effort invested balances the required outcomes.

## EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP

### *How well does the school's strategic leadership support and sustain a culture of learning and improvement?*

The school has developed a suite of effective management policies and procedures that support the operations of the school bringing consistency of practice and providing staff with a clear understanding of what is expected. However, whole-school decision making is largely seen by staff as not inclusive with limited opportunities for consultation or reflective discussion.

The school has a majority of early career teachers for whom this is their first teaching appointment. This places increased demands on the school to provide quality guidance, support and professional learning. Allowing teachers to experiment, grow and learn from each other and the leadership team, in a supportive and encouraging environment assists in the development of a culture of collaboration, trust and respect.

All teachers the panel met with reflected on the high expectations and accountability of the leadership team indicating this to be a desirable aspect of the school, however they referred to the high demands of compliance as having a detrimental impact on their classroom effectiveness.

The school has introduced a staff Performance Development process, however the process is currently viewed by staff as a standalone compliance requirement, with perceived little impact on the professional and Performance Development process. The school is well placed to review and develop a culture of learning and improvement through collaboration and shared accountability.

The panel recognises that every teacher at this school is committed and passionate about teaching and learning and already share an intrinsic accountability for improving student achievement. With a predominantly young, early career staff, the school is in a position to recognise and celebrate the quality teaching and learning that is currently happening in the school, and guide and support teachers to further develop their teaching and learning skills in pursuit of higher student achievement.

**Direction 4**    **To positively impact learning improvement, collectively develop a sustainable culture of learning and improvement with an explicit focus on ensuring decision making processes are clear, intentional and inclusive.**

## Outcomes of the External School Review 2019

The school has developed a comprehensive process for the analysis of student achievement data that identifies students learning needs and next steps in learning. Literacy and numeracy intervention programs are implemented based on academic performance and teacher discussions. The school has a dedicated group of SSOs that lead intervention programs with a high level of success.

The principal will work with the education director to implement the following directions:

- Direction 1** Collaboratively review the Site Improvement Plan Challenges of Practice, actions and success criteria to provide absolute clarity and a clear line of sight between goals and success criteria, building teacher capacity and responsibilities with a focus on improvement in student learning.
- Direction 2** To further enhance student engagement and challenge in their own learning and improve student outcomes, collaboratively design and implement a consistent whole-school understanding and approach to effective formative feedback.
- Direction 3** To ensure the assessment and reporting process have high strategic value in improving student outcomes, collaboratively review the parent reporting process ensuring that the time and effort invested balances the required outcomes.
- Direction 4** To positively impact learning improvement, collectively develop a sustainable culture of learning and improvement with an explicit focus on ensuring decision making processes are clear, intentional and inclusive.

Based on the school's current performance, Newbery Park Primary School will be externally reviewed again in 2022.



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GOVERNING COUNCIL CHAIRPERSON

# Appendix 1

## School performance overview

The External School Review process includes an analysis of school performance as measured against the Department for Education Standard of Educational Achievement (SEA).

### Reading

In the early years, reading progress is monitored against Running Records. In 2018, 78% of year 1 and 50% of year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. This result represents an improvement for years 1 and 2, from the historic baseline average.

In 2018, the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 73% of year 3 students, 71% of year 5 students and 67% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For years 3, 5, this result represents little or no change, and for year 7, a decline from the historic baseline average.

For 2018 year 3, 5, and 7 NAPLAN reading, the school is achieving within than the results of similar students across government schools.

In 2018, 47% of year 3, 0% of year 5 and 0% of year 7 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN reading bands. For year 3, this result represents an improvement from the historic baseline average.

For those students in 2018 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in reading, 0%, or 0 out of 4 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5, and 0%, or 0 out of 2 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7.

### Numeracy

In 2018, the numeracy results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 73% of year 3 students, 57% of year 5 students and 67% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For years 3, 5 and 7, this result represents little or no change from the historic baseline average.

For 2018 year 3, 5 and 7 NAPLAN numeracy, the school is achieving within than the results of similar groups of students across government schools.

In 2018, 13% of year 3, 14% of year 5 and 7% of year 7 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN numeracy bands. For year 3, this result represents little or no change from the historic baseline average.

For those students in 2018 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in numeracy, 50%, or 1 out of 2 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5, and 0%, or 0 out of 1 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7.