

DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
OFFICE FOR EDUCATION

EXTERNAL SCHOOL REVIEW
REPORT FOR WESTBOURNE PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Conducted in March 2015



**Government
of South Australia**

Department for Education
and Child Development

Review details

A priority for the Department for Education and Child Development (DECD) is to improve the educational attainment and wellbeing of South Australia's children and young people.

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

The overarching review question is "How well does this school improve student achievement, growth, challenge, engagement and equity?".

This External School Review has evaluated:

- *the school's self review processes and findings,*
- *the school's achievement data and progress over time,*
- *the outcomes of the meetings and interviews with representatives from the school, and*
- *parent and student views about the school.*

The External School Review included an analysis of the school's key policies and procedures.

The support and cooperation provided by the staff and school community is acknowledged.

This External School Review was conducted by Liz Matheson, Review Officer, Review, Improvement and Accountability and Cezanne Green and Angela Falkenberg Review Principals.

Policy compliance

The External School Review process includes verification by the Principal that key DECD policies are implemented and adhered to.

The Principal of Westbourne Park Primary School has verified actions are being taken to ensure compliance with the following DECD policies:

- Governance item 8: Monitor the site bullying data at least twice a year. Two processes have been instituted
- School Organisation item 5: Implementation of the Camps and Excursions policy. This policy has been drafted and will be presented to the Governing Council in week 3 of Term 2, 2015
- HR Management item 4: Site induction policy. This policy is now completed

Implementation of the DECD Student Attendance policy was specifically checked against a documented set of criteria. The school has implemented comprehensive tracking and intervention processes, and was found to be compliant with this policy. The attendance rate has been above the DECD 93% target throughout the period from 2008 to 2014.

School context

Westbourne Park Primary School is an inner metropolitan school with 552 students currently enrolled, which includes 75 reception students. The school enrolment has grown by more than 150 students in the last ten years. The school has an ACARA ICSEA score of 1132, and is classified as Category 7 school on the DECD Index of Disadvantage.

The school population includes 8 Students with a Disability and 28% students with English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EALD) background. At the time of the External School Review there was an increase in EALD students, reflecting an increase in the linguistic diversity within the local community.

The school leadership team consists of a Principal, a Deputy Principal and two Senior Leaders. In addition, one teacher has a lead role as Habits of Mind Coordinator and another teacher provides leadership through a Reading Support role.

Lines of inquiry

During the review process, the panel focused on three key areas from the External School Review Framework:

Student Learning:	How well are students achieving over time?
Effective Teaching:	How well do school practices support students to achieve in the higher proficiency levels?
Improvement Agenda:	How effectively does the school use data to plan for improvement and targeted actions at a classroom level?
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How well are students achieving over time?

Westbourne Park Primary School has a high percentage of students achieving at or above the DECD Standard of Educational Achievement (SEA) as measured by Running Records and NAPLAN over the period from 2008 to 2014. The school also has a high percentage of students achieving in the upper proficiency bands. In 2014, 55% of Year 3 students, 42% of Year 5 students and 36% of Year 7 students achieved in the Higher Proficiency Bands. Analysis of the NAPLAN numeracy achievement in 2014 revealed that most students achieved the DECD SEA and 39% of Year 3 students, 27% of Year 5 students and 36% of Year 7 students achieved in the Higher Proficiency Bands. The challenge for the school is how to increase this percentage and retain the students achieving in the Higher Proficiency Bands from Year 3 through to Year 7, particularly in numeracy.

In 2014, 75 out of 77 Year 2 students achieved the DECD SEA as measured by Running Records.

During the period from 2008 to 2014 there have been a small number of students who did not meet the DECD SEA. In 2014, 11 out of 75 Year 3 students did not meet the SEA in reading and 9 out of 75 Year 3 students did not achieve the SEA in numeracy. Review of the 2013 Annual Report revealed the achievement of students in Year 5 and Year 7 in writing in the 2014 NAPLAN was the lowest performance of all categories of the test.

The data profile led the Review Panel to ask:

How well do school practices support students to achieve in the higher proficiency levels?

The community of Westbourne Park Primary School undertook a significant review of its vision in 2014 to ensure that the strategic directions of the school provided a contemporary guide to its priorities, decisions and actions. Parents and student have participated three times over the past decade in a process to develop an agreed vision for the school. The Education Committee of Governing Council told the Review Panel they are keen the school remains relevant, engaging and prepares their children for the future in a rapidly changing hi-tech world. The most recent process involved 100 participants. The school is characterised as a positive and inclusive learning community in which the values of Friendship, Respect, Endeavour, Success, and Honesty (FRESH) are lived. The aim is to equip students to be successful, confident and creative global citizens using the Habits of Mind to provide a common language and way of thinking for students to engage in their learning.

This work and commitment to the new vision has provided the moral imperative for the school to be continuously improving.

Members of the Education Committee of Governing Council support the funding of staff development as a critical strategy in realising the vision for their children. The school is currently using a problem solving focus (known as the 6Ds) integrated with the Habits of Mind to inspire students to be problem finders as well as problem solvers, which encourages an inquiry and engaging approach to learning. The Review Panel was able to verify that there is a strong parent-school partnership and culture of continuous improvement.

Students of all ages were able to explain how the Habits of Mind helped them to apply a positive disposition to learning and to become more self-managing. The flexible learning spaces have enabled students to use technology to support their learning, to work collaboratively and to improve communication and creativity. Some students said they were able to 'get their teeth into things'. The Review Panel witnessed students engaged and concentrating on purposeful tasks and able to explain what was expected of them. Some tasks are set for students to complete over an extended period requiring their organisation and persistence to complete.

Many teachers use the Daily 5 system for structuring literacy time. Students select from five reading and writing choices, and work independently toward personalised goals. This system focuses on the skills in the CAFÉ which include comprehension, accuracy, fluency, and to extend students' vocabulary. Teachers were observed providing whole-group and small-group instruction, one-on-one conferencing and taking Running Records during the Daily 5. Teachers reported the Daily 5 system enables them to closely track students and the level of their performance. They also talked about how a common approach has enabled them to engage in collaborative planning.

Through several forums, it was reported to the Review Panel that the degree to which the Habits of Mind, the Daily 5 and other school based approaches are implemented varied from 'dabbling' to immersion. The Site Improvement Plan indicates the school is working towards consistency of practice.

The extent to which the Australian Curriculum is used to guide planning and assess achievement was less evident. At the end of 2014, the allocation of the Australian Curriculum Achievement Standards had been summarised into a table and it was planned that the staff would consider the data at a staff meeting in Term 2, 2015. At the time of the External School Review there were no processes or plans in place to moderate between teachers to ensure consistency in grading and there was not any evidence of a collaborative approach to design rigorous tasks that required students to demonstrate their understanding in different contexts and at deeper levels. The Review Panel concluded that the use of the Australian Curriculum was under-utilised and using it could add depth to the work of teachers and improve outcomes for students, particularly within the higher proficiency levels.

Direction 1

Provide seamless and cohesive learning for students by strengthening collaborative planning between teachers. Explicitly use the Australian Curriculum with Habits of Mind and ensure consistent implementation of assessment practices.

How effectively does the school use data to plan for improvement and targeted actions at a classroom level?

Teachers use a range of measures and indicators to identify students who are struggling in their learning. A common aim across the school is to develop students as self managers who can plan how to tackle challenges and take responsible risks. Strategies used include chunking tasks, graphic organisers to support thinking and planning, peer mentoring, parent/home reinforcement tasks resources and programs that target students' individual needs, visual aids and goal setting.

The school's Curriculum Appraisal Plan (CAP) is a form of performance development. The current focus for the discussions between teachers and their line managers is centered on the learning progress of students struggling to meet the SEA, as well as how students are being supported in higher order thinking. Teachers reported they found the CAP discussion useful in helping them to track progress and to raise concerns.

A withdrawal intervention program had been trialled and found to be effective for most students experiencing difficulties in learning to read in the early years. Students are withdrawn from class each week until they work through the program successfully. It took several students over a year to complete the program. A group of students spoke to the Review Panel and described what they had learnt and importantly, how they viewed themselves as 'readers' after completion of the program.

Several teachers reported to the Review Panel that they do not use the *Language and Literacy Levels* (LALL) EALD scales as a reliable source of data. The percentage of students at the school identified as being from EALD background was reported to be 28% and increasing. As achievement in writing could be improved across most year levels by using the LALL, support for staff to use this tool would provide greater depth to teachers' planning in supporting students to produce quality writing-based assignments.

How effectively does the school use data to plan for improvement and targeted actions at a school level?

The 2015-2018 School Improvement Plan (SIP) contains four key strategic priorities. These priorities align with the DECD Strategic Plan. Teachers representing their section of school formed the Team Coordinators group and are responsible for supporting the development and implementation of the plan and planning the schedule of staff meetings for each term. In undertaking this work the group reviewed the previous SIP to identify the current priorities and strategies. Much of the SIP has process targets to support the realisation of the school's vision.

Previous DECD practice has been to compare student achievement in one school with student achievement of other schools in a similar category on the DECD Index of Educational Disadvantage and other schools within the designated region. On the basis of this data analysis Westbourne Park Primary School is achieving very well. To continue to improve however, schools are encouraged to compare their achievement against their own historic performance, so that each school can evaluate its effectiveness and the impact of its improvement strategies on outcomes.

It is difficult to see the link between a comprehensive analysis of student achievement and the specific planning for improvement that will further raise the achievement of students at Westbourne Park Primary School. The percentage of students in higher proficiency bands in Year 5 and Year 7 are similar to the school's historic averages, which suggests different strategies need to be enacted to impact on these stagnant trends. The school is therefore encouraged to strengthen the use of achievement data using multiple data sets including EALD scales and the Australian Curriculum Achievement Standards to self review and to effectively target improvement plans and actions.

Direction 2

Strengthen the use of achievement data to self review the impact of school's strategies and programs and to inform future improvement plans and actions

OUTCOMES OF EXTERNAL SCHOOL REVIEW 2015

Westbourne Park Primary School is tracking well. Good performance was evident by a strong parent school partnership with a focus on preparing their children for the future in a rapidly changing hi-tech world.

The Principal will work with the Education Director to implement the following directions:

1. Provide seamless and cohesive learning for students by strengthening collaborative planning between teachers. Explicitly use the Australian Curriculum with Habits of Mind and ensure consistent implementation of assessment practices.
2. Strengthen the use of achievement data to self review the impact of school's strategies and programs and to inform future improvement plans and actions

Based on the school's current performance, Westbourne Park Primary School will be externally reviewed again in 2019.



Susan Cameron
DIRECTOR
REVIEW, IMPROVEMENT AND
ACCOUNTABILITY



Anne Millard
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
PRESCHOOL AND SCHOOL
IMPROVEMENT

The school will provide an implementation plan to the Education Director and community within three months of receipt of this report. Progress towards implementing the plan will be reported in the school's Annual Report.



David Adams
PRINCIPAL
WESTBOURNE PARK PRIMARY
SCHOOL



Governing Council Chairperson