

Department for Education

External School Review

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

Report for Westbourne Park Primary School

Conducted in June 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 all have been considered and contribute to the development and directions of this report.

This review was conducted by Kathryn Entwistle, Review Officer of the department's Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate and Yunni Seindanis, Review Principal.

Review Process

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

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

School context

Westbourne Park Primary School caters for children from reception to year 7. It is situated 5kms from the Adelaide CBD. The enrolment in 2019 is 529 students. In 2018, 567 students were enrolled at the school. The school is classified as Category 7 on the Index of Educational Disadvantage. The school's ICSEA score is 1111 and the local partnership is Mitcham Plains.

The school population includes 1 Aboriginal student, 10 students with a verified disability, 53 families eligible for school card assistance and 80 students of EALD background.

The school leadership team consists of a principal in the 4th year of her tenure at the school, 1 deputy principal and 2 senior leaders. There are 39 teachers including 3 in the early years of their career and 17 step 9 teachers. The school values are friendship, respect, endeavour, success and honesty.

Previous ESR or OTE directions were:

- Direction 1** Provide seamless and cohesive learning for students by strengthening collaborative planning between teachers. Explicitly use the Australian Curriculum with Habits of the Mind and ensure consistent implementation of assessment practices.
- 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.

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

The panel sourced evidence that the school has responded to the previous ESR directions. Support and leadership provided through partnership personnel has been instrumental in bringing this about.

Teachers have been engaged in a number of professional learning (PL) opportunities that have seen them develop a greater understanding of the Australian Curriculum (AC) standards, content and design. Time has also been allocated during partnership PL days that enable teachers to undertake collaborative moderation. Conversations during the 2019 ESR indicate that teachers would welcome continued opportunities to deepen their understanding of accurate grade allocation through school based moderation processes.

Staff have been involved in conversations that have allowed them to better understand the sequence of learning and the scope of concepts within some areas of the AC. Professional learning has seen teachers begin to utilise a learning design approach that focuses on how they can better deliver curriculum to engage students and build upon prior knowledge.

It is reported that some PL have greater capacity to develop teachers' capacity to design assessment tasks that allow students to demonstrate a breadth of learning. Although conversations with teachers and students made evident that tests requiring simple answers are still being used to evaluate student learning, it is acknowledged that more sophisticated assessment pieces are gradually being implemented.

The school's continued focus on Habits of the Mind (HOM) has seen teachers new to the school provided PL that allow them to promote these dispositions to students. The place of HOM in curriculum planning is evident as students and parents readily discuss the concepts and their positive influence. An

opportunity to further deepen the impact of HOM when faced with challenging learning opportunities that extend students' thinking will be discussed in line of inquiry 2 of this report.

The school's work against ESR Direction 2 is reflected in the first line of inquiry below.

Lines of inquiry

EFFECTIVE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

How effectively does the school monitor and enhance its improvement strategies and actions based on their impact on student learning?

The school's improvement priorities are widely understood and articulated by teaching staff. Some staff report that development of the school improvement plan (SIP) was a consultative process led by the partnership's Senior Leader Learning Improvement Primary. Existing improvement imperatives were maintained and incorporated into the 2019 SIP with challenges of practice (CoP) identified from these. Goal and target 1 identifies the aspiration that all teaching staff plan using learning by design, and goals and targets 2 and 3 identify an increase in students achieving in the higher bands of NAPLAN literacy and numeracy.

Performance and development processes (PDP) have been redesigned to align with the CoP. All teachers report that their PDP conversations and goals focus on the implementation of expected practices. The panel commends this contemporary and strategic approach that sees systems targeted to achieve school priorities.

Professional learning (PL) has also been designed to build teachers' capacity to implement agreed practice. Many teaching staff discussed the number of PL opportunities they have had to develop their capacity to implement literacy programs referenced in the SIP such as Daily 5, Seven Steps of Writing and SMART Spelling.

Parents, including governing council representatives, indicate an interest in having greater knowledge of the school's priorities and goals. Even though families have limited understanding of the school's improvement agenda they are highly committed to the school and their children's learning.

Systems that will be implemented to monitor the school's progress toward SIP targets throughout the year are currently in development with the evidence and data sets not yet defined. The panel encourages leaders to convene regular forums that enable evidence-based monitoring as the school responds to identified challenges of practice and their impact on student learning. A collective approach to this self-review process will support the development of a broader understanding of the school's priorities.

Direction 1 Ensure broader understanding of the school's priorities and monitor progress towards targets through the development of regular forums of self-review that are informed by data and collectively convened.

been supported through work with curriculum leaders. The panel commends this implementation. However, evidence of some teachers dismissing the value of data was sourced. These teachers report that time spent collecting data gets in the way of teaching. An understanding of the diagnostic value of data to identify and meet students' needs was not evident during these discussions. The panel urges leaders to consider how the strategic and effective use of data that some teachers employ can be used as a model to raise greater understanding of the benefits of data analysis for all teachers.

Professional learning teams (PLTs) meet twice termly and focus on building teacher capacity to plan effectively. The panel observed some of the PLTs in action and agree that a more targeted and consistent approach to these forums would be of value. Leaders planning together to establish common intent, actions and the resources they will all use to conduct PLTs consistently will be key in ensuring improved practice.

The need to build teachers' data literacy to better differentiate teaching is highly evident. The opportunity to introduce the concept of data through PLTs, and to endorse the value of data informed teaching, is a positive next step for the school to undertake. Consistent and informed leadership of PLTs will be pivotal in progressing this.

Direction 3 Deliver teaching that is tailored to students' learning needs through strategically designed professional learning forums that develop teachers' capacity to value, understand and analyse student achievement data.

EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND STUDENT LEARNING

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

Analysis of recently developed learning plans indicate that all teachers have begun to explore a more contemporary approach to planning, which in turn is expected to bring about pedagogical renewal. The format of these documents features 2 aspects that focus on how teachers will engage and challenge students.

In some classes, students have been provided opportunities to take part in learning that enables them to conduct exploration and inquiry, engaging in higher order thinking. In other classes, students take part in tasks that require lower level thinking: completing spelling activities or worksheets. Many students with whom the panel spoke describe their learning as either easy, or 'easy to middle'. A few students described learning as challenging, with one student explaining that the teacher 'gives me clues to get my brain thinking'. The concept of widespread student compliance was raised a number of times during the review and staff are aware that the opportunity to better inspire learners is apparent.

Systemic and school based literacy assessments make evident that many students achieve at or above standard, whilst also indicating that high band achievement is not consistently sustained into primary and middle years (see Appendix 1). The concept of challenging and extending students was discussed by leaders and some teachers as one that may be confronting to both families and learners. However, through extensive inquiry the panel identified that both parents and students would welcome opportunities to engage in learning that builds greater cognition and inspires students. The school's success in developing HOM provides an excellent scaffold to introduce greater challenge, as students' dispositions including persistence, responsible risks and continued learning can be promoted.

An opportunity for staff to explore how teaching can be better designed to engage and challenge students and to extend the capability of learners is an exciting prospect. The school has successfully implemented literacy programs across all classes, supported through tailored professional learning and performance development process. This model will support staff as they work to identify and consistently apply pedagogy that challenges all students.

Direction 2 Maximise every student's potential and achievement by identifying high yield pedagogical approaches that challenge and stimulate thinking which are consistently implemented across all classes.

EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP

To what extent do data, evidence and analysis of student learning needs shape professional learning and performance and development?

Some evidence of data used to identify students' learning needs and plan responsively is apparent. The school's introduction of the essential assessment program has seen data used strategically by some staff. Student miscues have been identified and a more differentiated approach enabled. Some teachers refer to self-designed assessments to determine ability groups, or stream students. Many teachers discuss quantifiable use of data, identifying what level has been reached and the next point in learning. Data used analytically to extend students at, or exceeding, standard was not apparent. Most teaching is pitched at the whole class level with some adjustments made for students who struggle.

Some staff discuss the importance of data to inform their teaching, reporting its significance in differentiating to meet student needs. Some teachers explain that their capacity to use data effectively has

Outcomes of the External School Review 2019

At Westbourne Park Primary School students are articulate, confident and respectful. Many demonstrate successful achievement and positive dispositions to learning. Parents agree that the school's work in introducing and embedding the HOM has been pivotal in bringing about these attitudes. The school's initial work in exploring how to plan teaching that further engages and challenges students is both timely and appropriate. Coupled with a diagnostic use of data, the school is well placed to maximise the potential of all students.

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

- Direction 1** Ensure broader understanding of the school's priorities and monitor progress towards targets through the development of regular forums of self-review that are informed by data and collectively convened.
- Direction 2** Maximise every student's potential and achievement by identifying high yield pedagogical approaches that challenge and stimulate thinking which are consistently implemented across all classes.
- Direction 3** Deliver teaching that is tailored to students' learning needs through strategically designed professional learning forums that develop teachers' capacity to value, understand and analyse student achievement data.

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



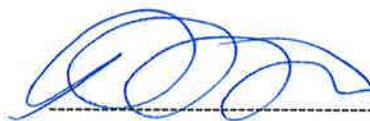
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Appendix 1

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, 87% of year 1 and 86% of year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. This result represents little or no change at year 1 and a decline from the historic baseline average at year 2.

In 2018, the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 96% of year 3 students, 90% of year 5 students and 82% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement under the SEA. For year 3 this result represents an improvement, for year 5, little or no change and year 7, a decline from the historic baseline average

Between 2016 and 2018 the trend for year 7 has been downward from 88% to 82%.

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

In 2018, 63% of year 3, 58% of year 5 and 37% 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 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in reading, 79% or 34 of 43 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5 in 2018, and 50%, or 11 of 22 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7 in 2018.

Numeracy

In 2018, the numeracy results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 90% of year 3 students, 93% of year 5 students and 96% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For year 3 this result represents little or no change and for years 5 and 7, an improvement from the historic baseline average

Between 2016 and 2018, the trend for year 7 has been upwards from 91% to 96%.

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

Between 2016 and 2018, the school has consistently achieved higher in year 5 NAPLAN numeracy relative to the results of similar groups of students across government schools.

In 2018, 53% of year 3, 40% of year 5, and 39% of year 7 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN numeracy bands. For year 3, this result represents an improvement from the historic baseline average.



For those students who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in numeracy, 69%, or 18 of 26 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5 in 2018, 75% or 12 of 16 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7 in 2018.

