

Department for Education External School Review

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

Report for Angaston Primary School

Conducted in September 2020



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 Simon Harding, Review Officer of the department's Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate and Joy Keddie, 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 group
 - School Services Officers (SSOs)
 - Student groups
 - Teachers

School context

Angaston Primary School caters for students from reception to year 7. It is situated 88kms from the Adelaide CBD. The enrolment in 2020 is 301. Enrolment at the time of the previous review was 290. The local partnership is Barossa Valley.

The school has an ICSEA score of 1029, and is classified as Category 6 on the Department for Education Index of Educational Disadvantage.

The school population includes 2% Aboriginal students, 7% students with disabilities, no students with English as an additional language or dialect (EALD) background, less than 6 children/young people in care and 21% of students eligible for School Card assistance.

The school leadership team consists of a principal in their 2nd year of tenure a deputy appointed in term 3 2017, with the main areas of responsibility in wellbeing and students with disabilities.

There are 18 teachers including 1 in the early years of their career and 4 Step 9 teachers.

The previous ESR or OTE directions were:

- Direction 1** **Increase the proportion of students achieving higher levels of learning over time by establishing processes for groups of teachers to regularly consider the progress of students against the standards and act together to improve teaching and learning across the school.**
- Direction 2** **Raise and sustain higher levels of learning for all students from one year to the next, by strengthening capacity of staff to engage in the analysis and use of student performance data and formative assessment, initially in mathematics, and then, increasingly over time, in all subject areas.**
- Direction 3** **Continue to engage teachers in professional reflection and observation as part of the SIP and performance and development processes, and ensure feedback from students is regularly used in class to monitor the impact of teaching and learning.**

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

The current principal and teachers recognise the limited evidence of strategic planning aligned with the previous directions over time. Teachers analysed data individually to inform their planning and, more recently, data was collated centrally and formed the basis of discussions focusing on the implications for teaching and learning. Teachers are now seeking to work more collaboratively and collectively when analysing data, with initial work influencing identification of priorities in the current site improvement plan.

The school is working with the Senior Leader, Learning Improvement Primary to analyse student performance data in maths, implementing learning sprints and sharing the outcomes of this work with other members of their team. A school-wide data schedule was established in consultation with staff. Through the establishment of the SWAN (students with additional needs) team made up of the leadership

team which has a focus on tracking and monitoring progress of identified students. Staff are invited to meet with the team each fortnight to address the ongoing needs of students, including updating plans and exploring additional strategies.

Leadership recently reviewed and established new performance development processes, where staff participate in formal observations and feedback meetings. Teachers work in professional learning communities (PLCs) (cross-year level), focusing on maths, using a common text to reflect on their practice. This provides opportunities for teachers to share good practice, identify challenges and participate in professional dialogue.

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 recent version of the site improvement plan (SIP) is reflective of effective, evidence-based planning. Leadership strategically developed the improvement priorities and consultation resulted in staff understanding and valuing the focused approach to the school improvement priorities. Staff are building a collective approach to improvement, both in student achievement and building their own capacity to best support the students with whom they work. Staff and leadership discuss actions taken towards improving student achievement as part of performance conversations. Through recent documenting of statements of practice in reading and numeracy, staff have a clear understanding of expected practices across the school.

Alignment of professional learning to the site improvement priorities, supported by the ongoing involvement of experts mentoring and coaching staff, is valued. This strategic approach includes professional learning, time to implement and regular times to share the learning at PLCs. Teachers could articulate how specific professional learning and resultant actions influenced their practice, particularly in literacy. Planned opportunities to work collaboratively in teams and increasingly sharing practice more widely across levels of schooling improves understanding of each other's work. There are expectations of linking professional development plans to SIP priorities. The principal provides regular updates on the progress of the plan to parents through governing council.

Staff are committed to SIP priorities, with processes forming to strengthen staff involvement in the identification, monitoring and evaluation of the plan. Staff opinions and feedback are valued throughout the stages of the improvement cycle. Leadership regularly schedule time in staff meetings for staff to monitor the progress of actions taken and impact on student outcomes. Cross-year level committees were established with responsibility for each site priority. PLCs are strengthening the capacity of staff to analyse student achievement data and discuss the implications for intentional teaching. Continuing to plan opportunities for staff to work collaboratively within teaching teams and across year levels, will support the development of collective understandings and practices. Staff understand their key role in the implementation of action plans and measuring the effectiveness of actions taken. Strengthening processes to support staff to more effectively monitor and evaluate the impact against the success criteria, both individually and collectively, will continue to enhance the school improvement strategies.

Direction 1 Strengthen collective self-review processes and efficacy of staff to effectively monitor and evaluate the progress of the SIP, highlighting the connectedness to tracking and monitoring, challenges of practice and success criteria.

Effective teaching and student learning

How effectively are teachers analysing assessment and feedback data to inform differentiated curriculum planning and instruction?

Leadership described the increasing use of data across the school to inform planning and intentional teaching. PLCs focus their conversations on student achievement data in mathematics and developing strategies to work with students to meet the learning needs. Leadership collated and provided baseline data for teachers, which initially supports differentiation, through making groups and targeting the collective gaps in learning. Leadership recently drafted a school assessment schedule for consultation and implementation by staff, providing common evidence-based datasets for reflective collective discussions on impact of improvement priorities.

Teachers support students' clarity of learning using learning intentions and success criteria. Teachers could strengthen this work by using common language across the site. Students identified how they used success criteria or the 'top 5' to improve their work and, at times, provide feedback for their peers. Implementation and language of these vary across the school. High levels of achievement in PAT and NAPLAN testing is not always reflected in A to E grading allocations, with relatively few students achieving an A grade. Collective discussions by staff, which support moderation of student work, will continue to strengthen common understandings and practices in this area. Parents stated that, when meeting with teachers about their child's progress, information they received was useful; however, formal reporting processes are currently not providing a clear understanding of how their child is progressing. Sharing data with students and their families, along with working towards common practices and language in making the learning 'visible' will continue to strengthen this work across the school.

Teachers' responses about the use of formative assessment, feedback and differentiation in learning varied. Teachers and students reported that 'unpacking' assessments with students, for them to understand what they know and what they need to know to improve, is not consistent practice across the school. Most students confirmed that teachers are providing feedback, and that feedback is important to improve their learning. Teachers acknowledged that seeking feedback from students, which informs their teaching, is an area for further growth. Leaders identified tracking and monitoring of agreed achievement data, with particular reference to individual student growth to inform teaching and learning, as a focus of improvement work. Collective development of effective, common practices to track and monitor achievement for intentional teaching, and supporting students to know how to improve are next steps for the school.

Direction 2 Provide students with clear information about their next steps in learning, through strengthening common evidence-based practices in effective feedback, increasing students' capacity to identify their progression of learning.

Conditions for effective student learning

To what extent does the school promote a culture of learning with high expectations of achievement for all learners?

Teachers and leadership are committed to strengthening collective practices to support students effectively in their learning. There are clear expectations set and supported by the principal aligned to the site priorities. The strategic approach to improvement now being undertaken is focused on teaching and learning. Leadership is building a culture of trust and an environment where teachers participate in reflective conversations on their practice with colleagues across the school. One example aligned to the mathematics priority is the use of a common text. Teachers undertake responsibility for reading, followed-up by cross-year level collegiate discussion in their PLCs, linked to their current practice and the potential impacts for their teaching. Teachers valued this new strategy and articulated how it assisted in building collective understandings beyond their year-level teams. Shared release time for collaborative planning and discussion provided teachers time to develop common approaches in their year level teams. As part of the revised performance development processes, leaders are aligning observations of teacher practice to a site priority area and endeavouring to provide timely feedback. Inclusion of school services officers in relevant professional learning gave them a greater understanding and direction for their work.

Students understood that challenge is important in their learning, that they can learn from their mistakes, and they are looking for increased challenge in their learning. The ongoing use of experts for professional learning and working alongside teachers has been highly valued by staff. The mathematics priority involved staff in PLCs discussing the implications for planning and teaching based on the student achievement data. The focus on effective task design provides stretch for all learners as part of this work. From teacher discussions and class walkthroughs, teachers are using a range of strategies to best meet the learning needs of students. Teachers acknowledge that strengthening collective practices in effective task design is a focus working towards embedding a culture of high expectations and provision of challenge in student learning.

Direction 3 Collectively strengthen practices of high-yield strategies in effective task design, which involve students in authentic learning opportunities inclusive of challenge and stretch.

Outcomes of the External School Review 2020

Staff are willing to build their capacity to provide quality learning for their students. Students are engaged in their learning and demonstrate a clear understanding of the expectations of themselves as learners. Value is placed on clarity and focus of the school improvement priorities and clear expectations of implementation.

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

- Direction 1** **Strengthen collective self-review processes and efficacy of staff to effectively monitor and evaluate the progress of the SIP, highlighting the connectedness to tracking and monitoring, challenges of practice and success criteria.**

- Direction 2** **Provide students with clear information about their next steps in learning, through strengthening common evidence-based practices in effective feedback, increasing students' capacity to identify their progression of learning.**

- Direction 3** **Collectively strengthen practices of high-yield strategies in effective task design, which involve students in authentic learning opportunities inclusive of challenge and stretch.**

Based on the school's current performance, Angaston Primary School will be externally reviewed again in 2023.



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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 2019, 56% of year 1 and 44% of year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. This result represents a decline from the historic baseline average for both year 1 and year 2.

Between 2017 and 2019, the trend for year 2 has been downwards, from 71% to 44%.

In 2019, the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 73% of year 3 students, 77% of year 5 students and 86% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For years 3 and 5 this result represents a decline, and for year 7 an improvement, from the historic baseline average.

For 2019, year 3, 5 and 7 NAPLAN reading, the school is achieving within the results of similar students across government schools.

In 2019, 51% of year 3, 44% of year 5 and 25% of year 7 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN reading bands. For year 3, this result represents little or no change from the historic baseline average.

For those students in 2019 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in reading, 72%, or 13 out of 18 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5, and 33%, or 5 out of 15 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7.

Numeracy

In 2019, the numeracy results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 73% of year 3 students, 69% of year 5 students and 89% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For year 3 and 5, this result represents a decline, and for year 7 an improvement, from the historic baseline average.

For 2019, year 3 and 7 NAPLAN numeracy, the school is achieving within, and for year 5, below the results of similar groups of students across government schools.

In 2019, 39% of year 3, 21% of year 5 and 21% 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 in 2019 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in numeracy, 56%, or 9 out of 16 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5, and 71%, or 5 out of 7 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7.