

# EXTERNAL SCHOOL REVIEW

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools

For

NORTH ADELAIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Was conducted in June 2019

The external school review process supports schools to raise student achievement and sustain high performance. It provides quality assurance to build and sustain public confidence in government schools.

The public report with directions for the future is available on the school website.

The review panel acknowledges the co-operation provided by the school during the review process.



**Anne Millard**

Executive Director, Partnerships, Schools and Preschools



**Government of South Australia**  
Department for Education



# **Department for Education**

## **External School Review**

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

**Report for North Adelaide Primary School**

Conducted in June 2019



Government of South Australia  
Department for Education

## 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 Ronnie Alderman, 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 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

North Adelaide Primary School caters for children from reception to year 7. It is situated 2kms from the Adelaide CBD. The enrolment in 2019 is 345 students and has steadily increased over the last 5 years. The enrolment at the time of the previous review was 301.

The school has an ICSEA score of 1132, and is classified as Category 7 on the Department for Education Index of Educational Disadvantage.

The school population includes 1% Aboriginal students, 6% students with disabilities, 22% students with English as an additional language or dialect (EALD), 1 child in care, and 6% of families eligible for School Card assistance.

The school leadership team consists of a principal in the 5<sup>th</sup> year of her tenure, a deputy principal, 23 teachers including 6 in the early years of their career, 5 Step 9 teachers and 5 AST2 teachers.

## Previous ESR or OTE directions were:

- Direction 1** Strengthen teachers' capacity to develop and use formative assessment practices, particularly in mathematics and numeracy, to inform their curriculum planning and instruction.
- Direction 2** Increase the proportion of students in higher proficiency bands by designing assessment tasks that require students to apply their understanding and skills to new contexts.
- Direction 3** Work with students to set and review goals, provide ongoing formative feedback that leads to improvement and by explicitly outlining standards to be achieved.
- Direction 4** Use student achievement and growth data as the centrepiece of self-review processes and the development of the SIP.
- Direction 5** Ensure the governing council has a clear overview of achievement and growth trends to support the school in setting the broad directions for the SIP.

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

The school has effectively engaged with the previous review directions by collaboratively developing a focused approach to achieve them. Professional learning has focused on transforming learning tasks in mathematics, providing students with opportunities to be appropriately engaged and challenged in their learning. Teachers have built on their capacity to assess and moderate student learning and have engaged effectively with the mathematics curriculum, thinking mathematically and developing their pedagogical approach to problem solving. As a result, student achievement in numeracy has improved considerably, both in the achievement of SEA and higher bands of NAPLAN.

The school has developed and implemented whole-school agreements in numeracy and literacy that have ensured a consistent and scaffolded approach to teaching and learning throughout the school. Collaborative teaching and collegiate learning teams have been strategically developed to focus on the specific learning directions of the school. This is clearly having a significant effect on the quality of learning, collaboration, consistency of implementation, and the whole-school responsibility and



accountability for student improvement. Staff have regular opportunities to participate in high level professional dialogue, mentoring and coaching where they discuss current pedagogical practices.

Analysis of student achievement data is now an embedded practice across the school enabling the learning needs of students to be met through specific intervention or extension tasks. Tracking of student progress allows the school to monitor student growth and address the learning needs of students systematically.

The governing council has reported to the panel that they are adequately informed regarding governance issues and participate effectively in the decision making processes of the school. They are provided with regular teaching and learning updates, SIP progress and whole school student achievement data throughout the school year.

## 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 has invested considerable time and resources into the collaborative development of the SIP. Teaching staff have collective ownership of the challenges of practice and associated actions and are committed and accountable for their implementation. An effective whole school self-review process is currently being developed that will ensure each action will be evaluated and reviewed to ensure relevance and measure impact. This will complement the already embedded practice of continually monitoring student achievement data and refining teacher practice, pedagogy and whole school learning agreements.

Improving student achievement in writing has been identified as a challenge of practice across the school. Teachers have embraced Brightpath as an assessment and tracking tool that is enabling the identification of students' next steps in learning and providing opportunities for teachers to moderate student writing with colleagues. Most students are aware of their next steps in learning and are involved in self and peer assessment of their writing against the Brightpath writing criteria.

The introduction of a school management group, consisting of leadership staff and a representative from each level of schooling, provides an opportunity to engage professionally in the review of student achievement data and reflect on effective teacher practice. The school is able to discuss, reflect and suggest changes to teaching and learning practices through these meetings with the explicit focus on improving student achievement.

The school has engaged a literacy coach to work alongside teachers in the development of explicit writing lessons that is enabling teachers to further develop their understanding of the writing process and develop engaging and challenging learning task for all students.

With classroom teachers clearly engaging effectively with the challenges of practice, actions and their review, the strategic inclusion of specialist teachers will further enrich learning across all areas of the curriculum and contribute to the development of a broader and deeper understanding of literacy and numeracy across the school.

**Direction 1** Broaden student literacy and numeracy skills across learning areas through strategic engagement in whole-school professional collaboration and the site improvement plan strategies.

## **Effective teaching and student learning – Effective Pedagogy**

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

Personal stretch zone charts are clearly visible throughout the school and are used effectively by students to identify their level of productive struggle. However, whilst students could clearly articulate a wide variety of strategies to indicate stretch in their classroom learning, some are yet to relate and apply this concept to life outside of school.

A whole-school consistent focus on transforming learning tasks in mathematics has enabled teachers to develop deeper understanding of how to challenge and stretch students in their learning. Students are encouraged to think critically and clearly explain their thinking. The use of 'Bump it up walls' is evident across the school as a strategy to stretch and challenge students. Having a visible reference to next steps in learning and challenge is highly valued by the students, however there are pockets of variance between some classes with higher achieving students indicating their learning in English and mathematics to be less challenging. This was also evidenced during classroom visits and through learning tasks that were observed.

Learning intentions and success criteria are used in most classes enabling students to understand the learning required and how they can improve. Middle years students make opportunities to co-design the success criteria with teachers, and in some classes, teachers receive feedback from students which is reflected in future learning design. All classrooms have the Australian Curriculum displayed as a working document where students have the opportunity to track the teaching and learning in their class, however the implementation of this varies across the school.

Most teachers have embedded high impact pedagogical practices that are having a positive impact on the learning achievement of students, however although elements of challenge, stretch and differentiated learning are evident in most classes, the challenge will be to reduce the level of variance across the school to ensure all students are effectively stretched and challenged in their learning.

**Direction 2** Build the capacity of teachers to design learning that provides stretch and challenge for higher achieving students through refining formal processes of collaborative professional learning, coaching and mentoring.

## **Effective teaching and student learning – Assessment and feedback**

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

The school has developed a comprehensive and innovative approach to the analysis of student assessment data to inform learning design with the validity of assessments continually questioned to ensure currency and relevance. An example of this is the use of the year 1 phonics screening tool as a guide for the teaching of reception students and to identify gaps in learning for year 2 children.

Examples of student learning tasks evidenced clear learning intentions, negotiated success criteria and a variety of assessment techniques such as self and peer assessment, with students able to clearly articulate their learning in most learning areas. Students could articulate the concept of productive struggle, understanding the deliberate attempt by teachers and peers not to rescue them in their learning.

The school practice of tracking and evaluating the learning of 6 high achieving students in each class places the emphasis on providing appropriate stretch and challenging in learning for all students and raising the levels of student achievement, particularly for those in the high bands.

Individual conferencing is a formative assessment practice used by some teachers that ensures focused attention on individual student progress and provides an opportunity for students to co-design their next steps in learning.



While there are pockets of successful implementation of formative assessment practices across the school, there is some variance. Students with whom the panel met indicated that while summative feedback is provided to them regarding their final assessment, they highlighted the need for progress reports along the way to guide them more effectively in their learning. This has resulted in student voice developing formative assessment cards to be used during the lesson time. Some teachers have embraced this initiative and are using it as an effective method to ensure the focus is on student learning.

The school is in a prime position to further enhance and embed formative assessment strategies that activate students as the owners of their own learning.

**Direction 3** Engage students in the process of their own learning so they develop a deeper understanding of the writing process by building staff capacity to design and implement a consistent approach to formative assessment.

## Outcomes of the External School Review 2019

The recent focus on STEM is having a positive effect on student learning across the school. Students are provided with opportunities to design, collaborate and apply critical and creative thinking through engaging and challenging learning tasks. The program is highly valued by students and parents and is creating a deeper understanding of how learning can be enhanced through meaningful learning connections. The governing council is positive about its level of involvement in decision making processes of the school and the level of communication provided by the leadership team.

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

- Direction 1**      Broaden student literacy and numeracy skills across learning areas through strategic engagement in whole-school professional collaboration and the site improvement plan strategies.
- Direction 2**      Build the capacity of teachers to design learning that provides stretch and challenge for higher achieving students through refining formal processes of collaborative professional learning, coaching and mentoring.
- Direction 3**      Engage students in the process of their own learning so they develop a deeper understanding of the writing process by building staff capacity to design and implement a consistent approach to formative assessment.

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



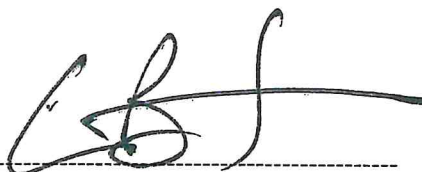
-----  
Andrew Wells  
A/DIRECTOR  
REVIEW, IMPROVEMENT AND  
ACCOUNTABILITY



-----  
Anne Millard  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
PARTNERSHIPS, SCHOOLS AND  
PRESCHOOLS



-----  
Rebecca Pears  
PRINCIPAL  
NORTH ADELAIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL



-----  
GOVERNING COUNCIL CHAIRPERSON



# Appendix 1

## School performance overview

The ESR 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 78% of year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. This result represents a decline for year 1 and little or no change for year 2 from the historic baseline average.

In 2018 the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 87% of year 3 students, 87% of year 5 students and 97% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement under the SEA. For years 3 and 5, this result represents a decline, and for year 7 an improvement from the historic baseline average.

Between 2016 and 2018, the trend for years 3 and 5 has been downwards, from 100% to 87%.

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

In 2018, 72% of year 3, 42% of year 5 and 59% 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.

Between 2016 and 2018, the trend for year 3 has been upwards from 59% to 72%, and for year 5 downwards, from 68% to 42%.

For those students who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in reading, 57%, or 16 out of 28 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5 in 2018 and 71%, or 12 out of 17 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 87% of year 3 students, 90% of year 5 students and 97% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For year 3 this result represents a decline, for year 5 little or no change and for year 7 an improvement from the historic baseline average.

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

In 2018, 68% of year 3, 35% of year 5 and 41% 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.

Between 2016 and 2018, the trend for year 3 has been upwards from 47% to 68%, and for year 5 downwards from 50% to 35%.

For those students who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in numeracy, 68%, or 15 out of 22 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5 in 2018 and 80%, or 8 out of 10 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7 in 2018.