

Department for Education

External School Review

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

Report for Paradise Primary School

Conducted in February 2020



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 Julie Bishop, Review Officer of the department's Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate and Sue Mittiga, 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 Services Officers (SSOs)
 - Student groups
 - Teachers

School context

Paradise Primary School caters for children from reception to year 7. It is situated 10 kms from the Adelaide CBD. The enrolment in 2020 is 98. Enrolment at the time of the previous review was 200. The local partnership is Campbell.

The school has an ICSEA score of 1005, and is classified as Category 5 on the Department for Education Index of Educational Disadvantage.

The school population includes 3% Aboriginal students, 12% students with disabilities, 40% students with English as an additional language or dialect (EALD) background and 45% of students eligible for School Card assistance.

The school hosts a satellite class from Modbury Special School, in which students from the class participate in shared learning and whole-school events. Beafield Education Centre is also based on the school grounds and operates independently of the school. The school leadership team consists of a principal in their second year of tenure. There are 5.6 FTE teachers.

The previous ESR or OTE directions were:

- Direction 1** Ensure that all students are intellectually challenged in their learning by building teacher capacity to design tasks that engage students in higher-order thinking.
- Direction 2** Motivate and support students to strive towards higher levels of achievement by developing consistent approaches to formative assessments using transparent success criteria and providing constructive task- relevant feedback.
- Direction 3** Strengthen the use of gradual release of responsibility model so that students are supported to negotiate their learning and to set and monitor appropriate personal learning goals.

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

Due to several leadership changes since the previous review, it is difficult to compare or see any impact as a result of these directions. In the area of direction 1, the panel believes that this has not been achieved. Despite being a small site, staff have not collaborated and are not aware of what occurs in other classrooms. Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) in 2019 have resulted in small changes, with some new staff seeing slightly more collaboration. This will gain momentum with more new staff on board in 2020.

Based on teacher and parent feedback, there has been an improvement in student behaviour. Remaining vigilant in expectations and recording behaviours has improved student behaviour in 2019.

Scorelink was implemented after the last review to track student achievement. The entering of data into Scorelink has been sporadic and therefore does not accurately reflect student datasets. High transience rates for some students has contributed to the difficulty in collecting datasets. Teachers have shown progress in the collection and implementation of class datasets, and the Read Write Inc literacy program will ensure accurate regular data in literacy is gathered and reviewed.

Lines of inquiry

EFFECTIVE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

How well does the school review and evaluate the effectiveness of improvement planning processes and the impact on student learning to inform next steps?

The panel noted a whole-school commitment to ongoing improvement. The leadership team have worked assiduously to build a culture of improvement that is supported by clarity and transparency in school improvement planning practices and processes.

Staff acknowledged that they were all responsible for monitoring the site improvement plan (SIP) and reported that the PLC is the forum used to track and monitor the SIP in three-weekly cycles. Staff noted that the support from the Department for Education personnel in facilitating the PLC had been significant in progressing common understandings in the tracking and monitoring of the SIP.

The school is well positioned to explore the inclusion of student participation as an integral component of key actions within the SIP. Sharing this work with the community will be a significant factor in strengthening the collective ownership of, and responsibility for, the ongoing progress and implementation of the SIP.

The school identified three goals to increase student achievement, namely reading comprehension, multiplicative thinking from years 3 to 5 and writing. Leadership have made amendments to the SIP as required, as evidenced by the principal's consultative decision to defer the focus on multiplicative thinking to a later date.

Leadership provided staff with access to relevant professional learning in reading and writing to progress the SIP priorities. Staff reported that the professional learning had been instrumental in strengthening common understandings in effective pedagogical practices in reading and writing.

The school introduced relevant assessment tools in writing to strengthen the tracking and monitoring of student progress. Staff, during interviews, indicated that progress in the writing goal was in a developmental stage and had been achieved to a minimal degree.

Staff reported that professional learning in guided reading has resulted in the development and implementation of a guided reading agreement across the site. Reading outcomes can be further enhanced through the implementation of an assessment tool to track and monitor reading levels for students in mid and upper primary.

Direction 1 **Improve reading outcomes through the implementation of an assessment tool that tracks and monitors reading progress for students who have achieved beyond level 30 in Running Records.**

EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND STUDENT LEARNING

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

Staff reported that assessment processes were used to group students and target specific aspects for improvement across a range of learning areas. Staff reflections identified the following strategies to strengthen assessment to inform instruction including the use of exit tickets, regular use of rubrics and checklists and adapting planning in response to student feedback. Some staff reflected that feedback from students was an area for further development.

Staff identified a range of summative and formative assessments used to inform differentiation. PAT (Progressive Assessment Test) M and R (maths and reading) data indicates that students at each year level are achieving at extremely high levels. However this is not congruent with NAPLAN higher band data in reading, writing and numeracy.

High levels of achievement are also not reflected in A to E grade allocations with few students achieving an A grade.

The school is well placed to identify, track and monitor higher-band students using a range of datasets across curriculum areas and year levels. Sharing data with higher-band students and their families is significant work for the school to undertake.

Staff indicated that moderation was an area for further development. Some staff identified that regular, planned opportunities to work with peers from neighbouring sites would provide opportunities to strengthen effective task design. The school is well positioned to develop whole-school processes to ensure that appropriate differentiation is available for all students.

The panel noted a whole-school commitment to ongoing improvement. Staff provided a diverse range of feedback processes used to inform and refine planning and instruction. The PLC is well positioned as a driver to strengthen and embed differentiated curriculum planning and instruction across the site.

Direction 2 Strengthen and embed differentiated curriculum planning and instruction through effective task design thus ensuring that all students have regular, planned opportunities to display learning at higher levels.

EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND STUDENT LEARNING

To what extent do teachers ensure that students have authentic influence in their learning?

The panel noted high levels of challenge and engagement from students when reflecting on a themed integrated unit study. Other students identified that units of work in STEM had also provided high levels of engagement. Students provided detailed evidence of processes used and explained the set task using technical language in a coherent and confident manner.

Some staff provided evidence of explicitly applying the language of learning with students, while other staff reflected that they used feedback from students to identify next steps for learning whilst also acknowledging progress to date. Several staff identified that supporting students to learn and apply the language for learning was an area for further development.

In a survey relating to a recent unit of work, 29% of staff indicated that learning intentions and success criteria were achieved to a high degree. In the same survey, 100% of staff reported that students had understood learning intentions at a medium degree, with 100% of students understanding success criteria at a medium to low degree. The school is well placed to develop clarity in whole-school understandings in the application of learning intentions and success criteria from the perspective of the student.

A number of staff identified that involving students in collaborative planning and decision making about their learning could be improved through determining student opinions in the 'what' and 'how' of learning. When we involve students in their learning as equal partners and develop their self-awareness regarding their strengths, preferences and areas for improvement we develop expert learners. Students at all year levels benefit from opportunities to be active participants in their own learning, sharing data, discussing reports, setting learning goals and sharing how they best learn gives real and explicit opportunities for all students to be successful learners. It also provides opportunities for students to see themselves as powerful partners in their learning. The school is well placed to undertake this significant work.

Direction 3 Collaboratively develop and embed a whole-school approach in feedback for learning from the perspective of the student.

Outcomes of the External School Review 2020

The leadership team has worked diligently to build a culture of continuous improvement with clarity and transparency in process and structure that support staff cohesion and collaboration. Very strong support for the work of the principal from staff, parents and governing council was apparent. The panel observed clear evidence of high levels of commitment to continual improvement across the site.

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

- Direction 1 Improve reading outcomes through the implementation of an assessment tool that tracks and monitors reading progress for students who have achieved beyond level 30 in Running Records.
- Direction 2 Strengthen and embed differentiated curriculum planning and instruction through effective task design thus ensuring that all students have regular, planned opportunities to display learning at higher levels.
- Direction 3 Collaboratively develop and embed a whole-school approach in feedback for learning from the perspective of the student.

Based on the school's current performance, Paradise 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, 67% of year 1 and 42% of year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. This result represents little or no change for year 1 and a decline for year 2, from the historic baseline average.

In 2019, the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 71% of year 3 students, 36% of year 5 students and 44% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For years 3, 5 and 7 this result represents a decline from the historic baseline average.

Between 2017 and 2019, the trend for year 7 has been downwards, from 89% to 44%.

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

In 2019, 36% of year 3, 21% of year 5 and 11% of year 7 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN reading bands. For year 3, this result represents little to no change from the historic baseline average.

For those students in 2019 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in reading, 0%, or 0 out of 2 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5, and 100%, or 1 out of 1 student from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7.

Numeracy

In 2019, the numeracy results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 57% of year 3 students, 64% of year 5 students and 63% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For years 3, 5 and 7, this result represents a decline from the historic baseline average.

Between 2017 and 2019, the trend for years 5 and 7, has been downwards, from 80% to 64% and from 89% to 63%, respectively.

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

In 2019, 21% of year 3, 7% of year 5 and 25% 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.

Between 2017 and 2019, the trend for year 3 has been upwards from 5% to 21%.

For those students in 2019 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in numeracy, 50%, 1 out of 2 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5, and 0%, or 0 out of 0 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7.