

Department for Education

External School Review

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

Report for Tanunda Primary School

Conducted in March 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, they all have been considered and contributed 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 Julie Hibell 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

Tanunda Primary School caters for students from reception to year 7. It is situated 78 km from the Adelaide CBD. The present enrolment is 475 and includes 33 students in the disability unit. Enrolment has increased over the past five years. The enrolment at the time of the previous review in 2015 was 431, which included 40 students in the disability unit.

The school has an ICSEA score of 1024 and is classified as Category 6 on the DfE Index of Educational Disadvantage.

The school population includes 1% Aboriginal students, 12% students with disabilities, 1% students with English as an additional language or dialect (EALD), 25% of families eligible for School Card assistance and 5 children/young people in care.

The school leadership team consists of a principal in the 4th year of her 1st tenure, a deputy principal, two senior leaders (disability unit and literacy), and a wellbeing leader.

The previous ESR was undertaken in 2015 and the school's previous ESR directions were:

- Direction 1** Increase the numbers of students attaining and retaining higher levels of achievement by engaging all students in regular opportunities to reflect on their progress against expected outcomes, receive feedback on their learning, and develop targets that stretch them to attain and exceed their current level of achievement.
- Direction 2** Raise and sustain higher levels of achievement for all students as they progress through the school by developing a whole school approach to curriculum planning and learning design that ensures learning intentions and success criteria are made explicit for students.
- Direction 3** Engage the governing council and the broader parent community in direction setting and strategic planning in ways that focus on working with the school to improve learning outcomes.

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

The principal reported that the following practices and processes have been implemented, resulting from the 2015 ESR directions:

- All students are involved in individualised goal setting R-7, with formative assessment practices and effective feedback processes becoming more evident in teacher practice.
- Whole school approaches in literacy & numeracy have been adopted, refined and implemented with greater consistency in all classrooms, and evidenced in teacher practice across the school.
- Shared ownership of agreements, with people willing to challenge and support others who are not following the agreements consistently evident.
- The use of learning intentions and success criteria have been observed in teacher practice during classroom observations, learning walks and within teacher programs.
- A handbook has been developed to support clarity in the role of the governing council. Governing council members also participate in school planning processes including parent

involvement in a range of committees and engagement with other partnership governing councils.

Lines of inquiry

EFFECTIVE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

How effectively does the school use improvement planning processes to raise student achievement?

The school provided extensive evidence of thorough, collaborative processes in relation to the development and monitoring of the school improvement plan (SIP), which is inclusive of the disability unit. Every staff member is allocated to a SIP committee and the governing council is informed via the principal. The 2018 SIP was reviewed with staff and an in-depth analysis of achieved targets was undertaken. Plans to follow up on targets not achieved have been developed.

The SIP is directly aligned with performance and development processes which included planned monitoring of the SIP, through teacher observations. The school has developed a tiered approach to teacher observations where informal observations and performance chats are undertaken in term one. Peer observations and feedback, including student feedback, occur in term two. Leadership observations and performance conversations are held in term three, with performance development reviews occurring in term four. Clear documentation, transparent processes, timelines and agenda items are outlined for each term and provided to staff at the beginning of the year.

The principal reported that the SIP has provided the school with greater alignment and congruence with their daily work. It was stated that the current SIP gave the site a more sophisticated approach to planning. Reflections also indicated that using the 'traffic light' system in the SIP had supported the school to go narrow and deep in the identification of next steps.

Direction 1 Embed common understandings in the implementation of the school improvement model with specific reference to sustaining achievement in reading and writing as students progress through the school.

EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND STUDENT LEARNING

To what extent are all students stretched and challenged in their learning, including students in the higher bands?

There was strong evidence of clear commitments from all staff to support students in their learning. In a recent survey, 70% of staff identified that students were engaged to a high degree, however only 44% indicated they had effectively created opportunities to stretch students to think deeply about the topic to the same extent.

Staff identified that providing opportunities for students to take risks in their learning was an area for further development. During interviews, the majority of students indicated that very little of their work was challenging. When asked what they did when they were challenged, many students indicated effort-based responses. A number of students indicated that they feel under pressure when the work is challenging.

There was clear evidence in some classrooms of staff scaffolding risk taking. In some classes students identified and shared problem solving strategies, resulting in students being able to select from a range of strategies when addressing complex problems. It was noted by staff that students who worked collaboratively demonstrated a greater capacity to engage in challenging learning.

Staff identified that sharing personal data with higher band students was an area for further consideration. The school is well placed to undertake such work, monitoring the retention and growth of higher band students.

Direction 2 Develop and embed regular opportunities for all students to confidently engage in intellectual stretch and challenge through planned learning across the curriculum in every classroom.

EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND STUDENT LEARNING

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

The school has worked to develop multiple layers of intervention across the site for vulnerable students. There is clear evidence of intensive intervention processes for students with learning difficulties and for students with verified learning disabilities.

All junior primary classes have a daily routine where from 8.25am to 8.55am, staff undertake running record assessments. The planned implementation of a reading assessment tool to track student progress beyond level 30 will support the school's goal to increase the number of students in the higher bands in reading.

Staff identified that analysis and assessment of writing was complex. Many students reported that they enjoyed writing but were unable to articulate why they were an effective writer. The current focus on writing assessment in the SIP will support ongoing work in this area.

Clear evidence of writing goals and scaffolds for learning were observed in many classrooms. In some classes, goal setting walls were visible and many students were able to articulate their specific goals. 65% of staff during interviews rated themselves between a 2 and a 3 on a scale from 0-5 in their effective implementation of formative assessment.

The school is well positioned to develop whole school processes that will support all students to provide feedback about themselves as learners on a regular basis. Teachers identified that some students are now seeking more feedback and are identifying their next steps in learning. Some staff have established opportunities for students to engage in peer conferencing.

Staff identified peer to peer feedback and reflection time at the end of every lesson as strategies to improve feedback for learning. It was also noted that teachers will need to teach the students how to provide effective feedback. Next steps will be for teachers to act on feedback from students about their teaching.

Direction 3 Develop whole school processes in the use of assessment and feedback data from students, supporting students to become active partners in their own learning.

Outcomes of the External School Review 2019

Tanunda Primary School has developed clear, transparent and comprehensive planning processes to ensure consistency and congruence in the management and organisation of the school. A strong culture of care and support for students and staff by the leadership was very apparent. Student wellbeing data and panel observations affirm a very supportive school culture.

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

- Direction 1** **Strengthen common understandings in the implementation of the school improvement model with specific reference to sustaining achievement in reading and writing as students progress through the school.**
- Direction 2** **Develop and embed regular opportunities for all students to confidently engage in intellectual stretch and challenge through planned learning across the curriculum in every classroom.**
- Direction 3** **Develop whole school processes in the use of assessment and feedback data from students, supporting students to become active partners in their own learning.**

Based on the school's current performance, Tanunda 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, 90% of year 1 and 64% of year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. This result represents an improvement for year 1 and for year 2, a decline, from the historic baseline average.

In 2018 the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 90% of year 3 students, 73% of year 5 students and 67% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement under the SEA. For year 3 this result represents an improvement and for years 5 and 7 this result represents a decline from the historic baseline average.

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

In 2018, 50% of year 3, 30% of year 5 and 17% 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, 67%, or 14 of 21 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5 in 2018 and 50%, or 6 of 12 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 82% of year 3 students, 87% of year 5 students and 85% 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.

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

In 2018, 25% of year 3, 31% of year 5 and 24% of year 7 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN numeracy bands. For year 3, this result represents a decline from the historic baseline average.

For those students who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in numeracy, 81%, or 13 of 16 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5 in 2018 and 58%, or 7 of 12 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7 in 2018.

