

Department for Education External School Review

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

Report for Littlehampton Primary School

Conducted in November 2021



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 Sue Mittiga, Review Officer of the department's Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate and Sally Wright, 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
- Discussions with:
 - Governing Council representatives
 - Leaders
 - Parent groups
 - School Services Officers (SSOs)
 - Student representatives
 - Teachers.

School context

Littlehampton Primary School caters for students from reception to year 7. It is situated 35kms from the Adelaide CBD. The enrolment in 2021, as at the February census, is 440. Enrolment at the time of the previous review was 470. The local partnership is Heysen.

The school has a 2020 ICSEA score of 1045 and is classified as Category 7 on the Department for Education Index of Educational Disadvantage.

The school population includes less than 5% Aboriginal students, less than 5% students with disabilities, less than 5% students with English as an additional language or dialect (EALD) background, no children/young people in care and 15% of students eligible for School Card assistance.

The school leadership team consists of a Principal in the 1st year of tenure, a Deputy Principal and an Assistant Principal also in the 1st year of tenure.

There are 26 teachers including 2 in the early years of their career and 15 Step 9 Teachers.

The previous ESR or OTE directions were:

- Direction 1** **Strategically increase student influence to allow opportunities for feedback to teachers, working collaboratively to co-construct the curriculum and jointly develop self-assessment criteria.**
- Direction 2** **Collaboratively develop, implement and embed an agreed cycle for rigorous self-review that shapes ongoing improvement.**
- Direction 3** **Work collectively to provide a robust culture of continuous improvement using self-review practices, which strategically link site improvement planning, professional development processes and teacher practice.**

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

Direction 1. Student feedback to teachers has occurred regularly through class meetings and the student executive group processes. Staff have collected feedback from students regarding the concepts taught in lessons and the task suitability as well as some feedback on their teaching.

Some students are beginning to engage with a writing assessment tool, to determine their writing levels and teachers are providing students with the opportunity to give peer feedback and self-reflect on their learning.

Direction 2. Staff have analysed data to inform the school improvement plan (SIP) goals and targets at staff meetings, learning team meetings and pupil free days. The review, evaluate and monitor impact stages of the improvement planning self-review cycle have been implemented and documented. Teaching impact cycles aligned to the SIP are implemented each semester.

Direction 3. Staff have participated in professional development aligned to the SIP goals including writing assessment and visible learning. Learning impact cycles have focused on the literacy and numeracy SIP goals and actions including moderating student writing samples against the writing assessment tool. A member from each learning team meets with leadership each term to set the staff meeting and professional development agendas. Staff have shared professional learning through professional learning communities (PLCs) and at staff meetings.

Lines of inquiry

Effective school improvement planning

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

Quality school improvement planning improves teaching practice and strengthens its impact on student learning. Staff at the school are committed to improvement. They have a willingness to work collaboratively and to improve their practice. Teaching impact cycles aligned to the SIP literacy and mathematics goals are implemented each semester. Every term during learning teams and scheduled staff meetings, staff review and evaluate the SIP implementation actions, documenting what they have achieved and their impact. Professional development and some staff performance development goals are aligned to the SIP. Parents and governing council members are aware of the SIP goals, reporting that they are updated regularly by leadership about the school's improvement and achievements.

The school's achievement data is showing growth and improvement over time. There is a shared ownership and understanding of the SIP goals, targets, and some of the actions. Staff are developing their data literacy. They have analysed whole-school and cohort data sets including NAPLAN, progressive achievement test (PAT) and writing assessment data to inform the SIP goals and targets. The SIP improvement target has focused on the Department for Education's standard of educational achievement (SEA) in reading, writing and mathematics. The school is well positioned to use data more strategically to enable greater precision in teaching and planning with a renewed focus on lifting students above SEA into the higher bands.

Staff have a clear focus on the reading and writing goal and have implemented some of the actions including documenting a literacy agreement, implementing an evidence-based instructional phonics program R-2, and utilising a writing assessment tool. Their understanding of the SIP's challenge of practice and the success criteria however was not as clear. There is an opportunity for staff to critically evaluate the impact of current curriculum delivery and pedagogical practices on student learning to collaboratively determine the plan's challenge of practice and success criteria. This would strengthen the line of sight from the SIP to classroom practice and enable staff to review the impact of their practice on student learning outcomes.

Direction 1 Collaboratively determine the challenge of practice and success criteria in the SIP to strengthen staff capacity to critically evaluate the impact of curriculum and pedagogical practices on student learning outcomes.

Effective leadership

How effectively does the school leadership ensure a clear focus on improving teaching and student learning?

Effective leadership ensures quality curriculum delivery and effective teaching for every student, with continuously improving learning outcomes. The school has a positive culture of learning, improvement and wellbeing. Positive education strategies have been embedded in every class. Staff explicitly teach learning behaviours, including the language of growth mindsets and the learning pit, that supports students to understand themselves as learners.

Staff are appreciative of the communication and accountability processes that have been implemented by leadership, including the opportunity for staff to provide feedback to leadership, clear consistent expectations, and explicit communication and information sharing processes. There are strongly embedded processes and structures that give staff the opportunity to work collaboratively including learning teams, PLCs, and committees. The school has some very skilled practitioners and building their capacity to provide mentoring and coaching for colleagues would further support improved pedagogy and curriculum.

Leaders are building staff capacity to lead PLCs and learning teams. Visible learning impact cycles each semester, that trial new practices and analyse the impact of these changes on student learning outcomes, have been implemented by PLCs. Impact cycles are data informed through pre and post-tests. They are documented and uploaded to the school's shared drive. The school could strengthen existing impact cycles by more explicitly linking them to the SIP challenge of practices. Identifying effective practice from the review of the learning impact cycles, sharing these with all staff, and consistently embedding best practice across the school would provide greater continuity of learning for students.

Some staff are trialling the new South Australian curriculum units of work. They found students had gaps in their conceptual knowledge and consequently they had to reteach concepts and challenge misconceptions. To achieve in the higher bands, students need to have a deep understanding of the concepts and skills to demonstrate the more complex skills of analysing, evaluating, comparing, and reasoning.

It is timely to lead a coherent approach to curriculum delivery by mapping curriculum R-7. Building staff knowledge and understanding of the Australian Curriculum learning progressions and the scope and sequence would ensure that learning entitlements are enacted for every child, through the provision of a guaranteed and viable curriculum.

Direction 2 Lead a coherent approach to map curriculum R-7, ensuring learning entitlements are enacted through the delivery of a guaranteed and viable curriculum.

Effective teaching and student learning

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

Assessment, data, and feedback are used to inform a cycle of assessing, planning, and teaching to support improvement and student achievement. The staff are building their data literacy and engaging with data to inform their teaching and learning. A data schedule has been developed that outlines the collection of summative whole-school, cohort, and class data. This is analysed to inform SIP progress against goals and targets and intervention programs. R-2 formative assessment data is used to inform explicit next steps in teaching phonics and phonemic awareness. Writing assessment data is used R-7 to moderate student writing samples to determine students' next steps.

Staff are beginning to explore PAT diagnostic data, in reading and mathematics. There was limited evidence of formative assessment and feedback being used to move learning forward, informing differentiation for all students including those in the higher bands. Staff indicated that a next step for them is to engage more deeply with diagnostic assessment data to enable greater differentiated practice.

Oral feedback provided to students by staff, and self and peer feedback processes, were evident in some classrooms. Staff reported they conference students, give oral feedback, use exit slips, thumbs up and traffic light feedback processes with students. Some students described feedback processes, including gallery walks and using peer and self-feedback checklists. Students were unclear about their assessment and learning data. The school is well positioned to build student ownership and understanding of their own learning data, empowering them to monitor, assess and give feedback on their learning to inform differentiated teaching practices.

Pedagogical, literacy and numeracy agreements have been developed and documented that include high impact strategies to inform students and teachers about teaching and learning and the next steps. These include formative assessment and feedback, learning intentions, success criteria and goal setting. Whilst there are some high-level examples of these processes, there is inconsistent implementation of the agreements across the school. It is timely to revisit the agreements with staff. There is significant opportunity to embed high impact pedagogical practices that would empower teachers and students to engage more deeply with formative assessment and learning data to inform differentiation.

Direction 3 Empower staff and students to engage more deeply with formative assessment processes to inform differentiated teaching and learning.

Outcomes of the External School Review 2021

Littlehampton Primary School is highly regarded by parents, staff, and students. A positive school culture of improvement exists that is underpinned by a focus on wellbeing for learning. Positive education strategies have been embedded across the school including a focus on growth mindsets. Leadership and staff are working collaboratively together to improve their practice through engaging in visible learning impact cycles to trial new practices and evaluate their impact on student learning outcomes.

The Principal will work with the Education Director to implement the following directions:

- Direction 1 Collaboratively determine the challenge of practice and success criteria in the SIP to strengthen staff capacity to critically evaluate the impact of curriculum and pedagogical practices on student learning outcomes.**
- Direction 2 Lead a coherent approach to map curriculum R-7, ensuring learning entitlements are enacted through the delivery of a guaranteed and viable curriculum.**
- Direction 3 Empower staff and students to engage more deeply with formative assessment processes to inform differentiated teaching and learning.**

Based on the school's current performance, Littlehampton Primary School will be externally reviewed again in 2024.



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Governing Council Chairperson

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 2020 82% of year 1 and 81% of year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. This result represents little or no change from the historic baseline average.

In 2021 the reading results as measured by NAPLAN indicate that 91% of year 3 students, 83% of year 5 students and 88% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For years 3 this result represents an improvement from the historic baseline average, and for years 5 and 7 this result represents little or no change from the historic baseline average.

For 2021 year 3 NAPLAN reading the school is achieving higher than the results of similar students across government schools and for years 5 and 7 NAPLAN reading the school is achieving within the results of similar students across government schools.

In 2021 58% of year 3, 38% of year 5 and 35% of year 7 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN reading bands. For year 3, 5 and 7 this result represents an improvement from the historic baseline average.

For those students in 2021 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in reading 67% or 16 out of 24 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5 and 65% or 13 out of 20 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7.

Numeracy

In 2021 the numeracy results as measured by NAPLAN indicate that 96% of year 3 students, 81% of year 5 students and 83% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For year 3 this result represents an improvement from the historic baseline average. For year 5 this result represents little or no change from the historic baseline average and for year 7 this result represents a decline from the historic baseline average.

For 2021 year 3, 5 and 7 NAPLAN numeracy the school is achieving within the results of similar groups of students across government schools.

In 2021 45% of year 3, 21% of year 5 and 42% of year 7 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN numeracy bands. For year 3 and 7 this result represents an improvement from the historic baseline average. For year 5 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 numeracy 47% or 9 out of 19 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5 and 85% or 17 out of 20 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7.