

# **Department for Education**

## **External School Review**

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

### **Report for Paringa Park Primary School**

Conducted in March 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, they all have been considered and contributed to the development and directions of this report.

This review was conducted by Debbie Grzeczowski, Review Officer, of the department's Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate and Angela Falkenberg, Review Principal.

## Review Process

The following processes were used to gather evidence relating to the lines of inquiry:

- Presentation from the principal and leadership team
- 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

Paringa Park Primary School caters for children from reception to year 7. It is situated 10kms from Adelaide CBD and is part of the Holdfast Partnership. Current enrolment is 530 and enrolments have increased over the last five years. The enrolment at the time of the previous review was 425.

The school has an ICSEA score of 1099, and is classified as Category 7 on the Department for Education (DfE) Index of Educational Disadvantage.

The school population includes 3% Aboriginal students, 4% students with disabilities, 6% students with English as an additional language or dialect (EALD), 8% of families eligible for School Card assistance and 1 child in care.

The school leadership team consists of a principal in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of her tenure, deputy principal, assistant principal and a student wellbeing leader.

## Previous ESR or OTE directions were:

- Direction 1** Increase proportion of students achieving and sustaining higher bands of learning by monitoring the progress of each student and measuring performance against specific criteria, individual goals and site targets that are evidence-based and aspirational.
- Direction 2** Increase student participation and parent engagement with the learning program by actively and openly involving each child and their parents as partners in their learning program.
- Direction 3** Raise the level of learning for all students from one year to the next by developing and implementing teacher agreements that ensure high quality curriculum planning and evidence-based teaching practice exists across the school from R-7.

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

The previous ESR directions have guided the school's improvement agenda since the last review. Significant professional learning has been a feature at the school over the previous four years, as well as funding literacy expertise in the form of a scaffolded literacy coach to work alongside teachers and improve practice.

The school has extended its previous powerful learner and growth mindset focus into Cultures of Thinking which commenced early 2018 with staff receiving coaching from an outside provider.

Work on the previous directions has enabled the school to collect and interrogate data as part of whole school practice. The use of a central data collection program coupled with a data collection schedule has refined and produced cohesion around data.

## Lines of inquiry

### EFFECTIVE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING:

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

The panel found that all teachers are engaging with a wide range of achievement and growth data, supported by a collection schedule and the use of 'Sentral' as central storage. Leadership have aligned staff meeting structures to facilitate the opportunity for professional learning teams (PLT) to meet regularly and interrogate data as part of ongoing practice.

Staff analysed data and collectively engaged in the formation of the school improvement plan (SIP) during a student free day. Staff worked together to produce goals and targets, which align with the school's vision. Staff valued the opportunity to triangulate data and analyse how this would impact on their improvement cycle. Although staff valued working collaboratively to create their SIP, they reported disconnect to certain elements which has impacted on their full ownership of the plan.

The panel felt that leadership have a clear understanding of what they want to achieve to improve outcomes at Paringa Park Primary School (PPPS) which was further evidenced through conversations with community and staff. The focus now needs to be on whole school ownership of the improvement plan, with staff clearly seeing how they connect with it. Through regular and strategic self-review processes, the school will be able to determine and respond to the impact that programs and strategies have on teacher practice and student learning. Having clear structures and processes to monitor and observe teacher practice and linking it to the narrow focus of the SIP will provide rigour and support a cycle of continuous improvement to improve student outcomes.

**Direction 1** Refine structures and processes which drive and support the improvement agenda by providing continuous monitoring and evaluation of the impact of programs and strategies on student outcomes, promoting a shared understanding, ownership and accountability to the SIP.

### EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND STUDENT LEARNING:

#### *How effectively are teachers supporting students to improve their learning?*

The panel saw evidence that teachers have a good understanding of the Australian Curriculum (AC) with most teachers using pre-assessment to refine planning and post-assessment to track student growth. All staff track data to identify students but the panel found little evidence of how this was being used to inform student learning as differentiated lessons were not evidenced as consistent practice.

Most students are aware of their reading level but the panel found little evidence of learning goals, although some students reported having them in previous years. Most students with whom the panel spoke indicated that their work was 'just right' but felt they needed to be challenged and given harder work to push and stretch their learning. Tasks evidenced in bookwork and through discussions and observations provided limited opportunity to achieve higher grades. The panel felt that increased opportunities to refocus on learning design and outcomes within Professional Learning teams (PLTs) and utilising the expertise from within the school, would enable this to become routine practice.

Students reported wanting more ownership of their learning and articulated the need for success criteria to help them monitor their progress and inform them of their next steps in learning. Some students

reported value from teacher feedback which occurs whilst they are engaged in a task. However, this was not evidenced as consistent practice and was identified by staff as an area for improvement.

Students at PPPS have the opportunity to become partners in their own learning by being provided with consistency and clarity in what they are learning, the purpose of their learning and how they can be successful. When teachers discuss and collaboratively develop the criteria with their students, impact on learning is heightened. Consideration should be given to building teacher capacity through using the expertise of identified staff to provide professional learning and mentor staff. This will reduce the reliance on outside providers and provide opportunities for staff to further develop their skills.

**Direction 2** Strengthen student agency in learning and provide opportunities for all students to experience stretch and challenge through co-constructing the curriculum, setting of individual learning goals, establishing clear learning intentions and success criteria which enable students to monitor and assess their learning.

## **EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP**

***How well does leadership facilitate the development of coherent high quality curriculum planning and effective teaching?***

The leadership team have a clear vision for improvement at PPPS with professional development plans and professional learning clearly aligned to the SIP. The school has invested in a variety of professional development, which has resulted in pockets of good practice but a lack of whole school consistency. This view was echoed by staff, parents and students. Staff reflected that guided reading varied in each class and the parents reported that expectations and communication varied significantly between classes.

The panel acknowledged the necessity and significant work behind the creation and updating of policies but feel that the focus now needs to be on consistency and rigour of pedagogical practice. Greater consistency of practice will lead to a clearer sense of what the school is 'going after'. The new school improvement model, with its narrow and deep focus, will support the school to build this consistency of pedagogy. There is opportunity to build understanding and consistency through the expertise of staff within the school. Using the capacity of staff to mentor and coach others will promote ownership and share effective practice.

Clearly documenting whole-school approaches, which include a common language for learning and student influence, will provide cohesion and support student learning. Documents outlining the 'PPPS way of doing things' will further support the induction for new staff and provide a clear sense of identity to the community. Having explicit guidelines and shared understandings will promote a common understanding of best practice to support PPPS's improvement agenda.

**Direction 3** Develop, implement and monitor whole-school approaches which provide opportunity to positively impact student learning and provide consistency in effective pedagogical practices.

## Outcomes of the External School Review 2019

Paringa Park Primary School has a strong sense of community which is being maintained despite its growth in size. Students, staff and parents express a sense of pride in their school which is reflected in the positive relationships developed. The school is supported by a large number of highly skilled volunteers.

Students are involved in organisational decisions within the school and have instigated and supported a variety of lunchtime activities for all students to access. Students are extremely respectful and report being happy and safe at school.

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

- Direction 1** Refine structures and processes which drive and support the improvement agenda by providing continuous monitoring and evaluation of the impact of programs and strategies on student outcomes, promoting a shared understanding, ownership and accountability to the SIP.
- Direction 2** Strengthen student agency in learning and provide opportunities for all students to experience stretch and challenge through co-constructing the curriculum, setting of individual learning goals, establishing clear learning intentions and success criteria which enable students to monitor and assess their learning.
- Direction 3** Develop, implement and monitor whole-school approaches which provide opportunity to positively impact student learning and provide consistency in effective pedagogical practices.

Based on the school's current performance, Paringa Park 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, 78% of year 1 and 81% of year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. This result represents a decline from the historic baseline average.

In 2018 the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 89% of year 3 students, 89% of year 5 students and 91% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement under the SEA. For year 3 this result represents a decline and for year 5 and 7 this represents little or no change, from the historic baseline average.

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

In 2018, 54% of year 3, 43% of year 5 and 34% of year 7 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN reading 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 reading, 62%, or 23 of 37 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5 in 2018 and 55%, or 18 of 33 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 90% of year 3 students, 92% of year 5 students and 93% 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, 5 and 7 NAPLAN numeracy, the school is achieving within the results of similar groups of students across government schools.

In 2018, 37% of year 3, 32% of year 5 and 26% 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, 61%, or 17 of 28 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5 in 2018 and 50%, or 8 of 16 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7 in 2018.

