Department for Education

External School Review

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

Report for Peterborough Primary School

Conducted in May 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 here, they have all been considered and contribute to the development and directions of this report.

This review was conducted by Greg Graham, Review Officer of the department's Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate and Belinda Kopania, 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: Aboriginal Community Education Officer (ACEO)
                        Governing Council representatives
                        Leaders
                        School Support Officers (SSOs)
                        Students groups
                        Teachers

School context

Peterborough Primary School caters for children from reception to year 7. It is situated 245kms from the Adelaide CBD. The enrolment in 2019 is 58 students. Enrolment at the time of the previous review was 87 students.

The school has an ICSEA score of 863 and is classified as Category 2 on the Department for Education Index of Educational Disadvantage. The local partnership is Flinders.

The school population includes 22% Aboriginal students, 21% students with a verified disability, and 41% of families eligible for school card assistance.

The school leadership team consists of a principal in the 4th year of her tenure at the school, 8 teachers, including 1 in the early years of their career, 1 Step 9 teacher, 1 AST 2 teacher, 1 AET, 6 SSOs and 1 ACEO.

Previous ESR or OTE directions were:

Direction 1   Strategically analyse students' achievement data, particularly those in the middle and upper years, to identify specific learning needs and align teaching strategies and interventions to lift students into higher bands.

Direction 2   Maintain the intensity and focus of the school improvement processes that are currently in place, particularly the focus on growth mindset and improved student attendance. Review the breadth of data that is collected so as to maintain the already well-articulated and relentless focus on lifting student achievement.

Direction 3   Continue the focus on building the capacity of teachers, and in particular their ability to provide greater differentiation in their teaching for all learners, but specifically to support more able students to be more successful.

Direction 4   Explore how the continuing focus on student voice can be utilised to further support teachers in refining their practice.

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

Since the last review it was evident to the panel that there had been intentional actions to address the 4 directions. The panel commends the principal and leadership team for using a child-centred focus to present the actions taken to address the previous directions. They were able to demonstrate the successful progress of all targeted groups of students and how the directional changes have impacted on learning. Through the principal's presentation it was evident that there has been a logical and sequential process implemented to address the directions. Actions included aligning the school's directions with the partnership improvement plan, system improvement strategies such as Results Plus, undertaking a data day and analysing quality datasets.

Further developments through the Learning Design, Assessment and Moderation (LDAM) strategy, undertaking programs such as Brightpath writing and the Collaborative Impact Programs that incorporate visible learning strategies have also informed learning strategies. Improvement cycle sprints, the support of an impact coach, a focused professional development program on pedagogical shifts and whole-school agreements about effective learner characteristics have been implemented.

Partnership activities have built teacher capacity in areas including learning dispositions, effective feedback and student voice.

Working with child wellbeing practitioners and the attendance officer to monitor student attendance, and working closely with families to support them to ensure attendance, has resulted in improved attendance and a drop in unexplained absences.

Staff are seen as dedicated professionals who are passionate about the school and the students. There is a sincere intent to provide students with quality teaching and learning.

Lines of inquiry

EFFECTIVE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

How well does the school use evidence from student achievement and growth data to inform relevant and high impact goals and targets for improvement?

It has been recognised that the school uses information from a variety of assessment datasets to support and plan for improved student learning. Site based data sources are in place to track all students with a focus on growth points as part of a 'face to the data' approach. The use of infographics and regular data days inform goal setting and target attainment. Teachers reported that the focus on Progress Achievement Test data, and use of the learning sprint model to develop an understanding of how to continually refer to and reflect on data, has been beneficial in monitoring student growth. The readily available access to student data has enabled staff to increasingly use data when lesson planning.

Intervention programs such as Quicksmart, Ripper Reading and Mathletics are leading to growth for targeted students. Educators work in the testing, collection, collation and analysis of data which is successfully shared amongst staff. It is important to note that this work includes the staff and students based at the Yunta campus and the weekly meeting of the two sites enables further monitoring and sharing of student progress.

Achievement information for students attending the learning centre is based on their NEPs. Due to the variation of the learning requirements of each individual, the tracking and monitoring of progress is differentiated according to needs.

The school uses student achievement and growth data to identify goals and targets for improvement. In building the capacity of all staff, the collaborative approach when analysing student data to identify strengths, gaps and trends to inform goals for improvement should continue for the school. Continually engaging staff in data analysis that triangulates information about student achievement from a range of sources will clarify learning progress, as well as identify what students know and can do, and what each student is ready to learn next.

Direction 1   Strengthen the schools internal self-review and quality assurance processes for the purpose of monitoring and reviewing student learning to raise student achievement and meet school improvement goals.

EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP

How effective are the schools professional learning and performance and development processes building teacher capacity?

The previous Site Improvement Plan (SIP) prioritised the building of teacher capacity with a particular focus on differentiated teaching. The school has undertaken a number of strategies to address this goal starting with professional learning through partnership activities and hub groups. The staff were unanimous in their acknowledgement of the impact of this professional learning and the follow-up work at a site level.

Teachers were able to identify a variety of professional activities undertaken as a whole-school, in learning teams and as individuals. These include the visible learning strategies, Thinking Maths and intervention programs made available to all staff. The use of an impact coach across the school has supported teacher development and the focus on curriculum implementation. The LDAM work of the partnership in formative assessment has also commenced.

Evidence from the teacher pedagogical survey conducted by the panel indicated that 85% of teachers rated themselves in the 'medium extent' in the planning and design of tasks. A focus area within this is the use of learning intentions and success criteria in task design. As teacher capacity grows this will evolve into a deeper understanding of the use of learning intentions through the eyes of students.

The panel acknowledges that the staff are collaborative and supportive of each other. The principal conducts walkthrough observations to support staff with aspects of their practice. To capture consistency of practice between teachers, the next step for the school is to develop a process for peer observations that strengthens the connectivity between the work of the early years teachers and those in the primary years. The next phase for the school is to develop a whole-school approach which identifies quality teaching pedagogy that, when embedded, will see consistency of practice across the school.

Direction 2   Develop a consistent pedagogical approach from R-7 by building the capacity of teachers to engage with evidence-based data and include student influence and high leverage learning strategies when planning and teaching.

CONDITIONS FOR EFFECTIVE STUDENT LEARNING:

To what extent does the school promote a culture of learning with high expectation of achievement for all learners?

The 2018 Annual Report survey results demonstrated a collective response of 'strongly agree' by parents, students and staff that 'high expectations' and 'motivation' for learning is highly valued and recognised across the school. This is complemented by one of the 2019 SIP success criteria: students being confident in understanding and explaining their thinking and transfer their learning in different contexts.

The panel noted that the promotion of a culture of learning was demonstrated through the sharing of student progress and achievements as part of student led 3 way conferences. Parents commented on how the students understood their results and aspirational learning goals. Parents also commented on the use of the *Class Dojo* app which has enabled them to have ready access to their child's daily learning achievements.

Teachers generally access feedback, both to and from students, through a conferencing approach that informs students of their success and where to improve.

The establishment of the Wadli room reflects a growing focus on a culture of learning for Aboriginal students. This has been extended into the secondary school setting to support transition and the continuity of learning for Aboriginal students. The school celebrates the success of these students through assemblies, newsletter publications and involvement in interschool and community events.

The principal's presentation successfully demonstrated the progress of students and how classroom practices and systems have impacted on their learning. Processes are in place for the next step of developing teacher capacity to improve their pedagogical knowledge and practices so they are more able to stretch and challenge all students in their learning. The school is poised to further build a culture of learning and high expectation within the classroom, across the school and the broader community. Revisiting concepts such as a Growth Mindset and the Learning Pit to specifically teach students about stretch and being persistent and resilient should be considered.

Direction 3   Develop high expectation of achievement for all learners by exploring and implementing approaches that integrate and embed intellectual stretch, challenge and rigour into daily classroom teaching and learning.

Outcomes of the External School Review 2019

Peterborough Primary School's progress is developing a culture of improvement characterised by extensive professional learning of teachers in collaboration with the partnership and curriculum coaches. Effective leadership provides strategic direction in learning and targeted interventions. Self-review processes are regularly and strategically used to determine the impact of teaching practice on student achievement.

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

Direction 1   Strengthen the schools internal self-review and quality assurance processes for the purpose of monitoring and reviewing student learning to raise student achievement and meet school improvement goals.

Direction 2   Develop a consistent pedagogical approach from R-7 by building the capacity of teachers to engage with evidence-based data and include student influence and high leverage learning strategies when planning and teaching.

Direction 3   Develop high expectation of achievement for all learners by exploring and implementing approaches that integrate and embed intellectual stretch, challenge and rigour into daily classroom teaching and learning.

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

Tony Lunniss
DIRECTOR
REVIEW, IMPROVEMENT AND
ACCOUNTABILITY

Anne Millard
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
PARTNERSHIPS, SCHOOLS AND
PRESCHOOLS

Ree Tyas
PRINCIPAL
PETERBOROUGH PRIMARY SCHOOL

GOVERNING COUNCIL CHAIRPERSON
Sarah Thomas

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).

In considering the data below, there needs to be some caution in making a judgement due to the low numbers represented in the student cohorts at the school. The data below represents a summary of aggregated data for Peterborough Primary School over the years 2014 to 2018. This is done for two reasons: to overcome the anomalies that may occur in any one year, and to minimise the possibility of identifying individuals in any small cohort of students.

Reading

Between 2014 and 2018, the Running Record results, indicate that 69% of year 1 students and 63% of year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement under the SEA.

Between 2014 and 2018, the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 55% of year 3 students, 51% of year 5 students, and 65% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement under the SEA.

Between 2014 and 2018, 16% of year 3 students, 12% of year 5 students and 5% of year 7 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN reading bands.

Between 2014 and 2018, for those students who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in reading, 80% of students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5 and 100% of students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7.

Numeracy

Between 2014 and 2018, the numeracy results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 56% of year 3 students, 51% of year 5 students, and 65% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement under the SEA.

Between 2014 and 2018, 11% of year 3 students, 7% of year 5 students and 2% of year 7 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN numeracy bands.

Between 2014 and 2018, for those students who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in numeracy, 20% of students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5 and no students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7.