

Department for Education

External School Review

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

Report for Para Vista 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 Greg Graham, Review Officer of the department's Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate and Cheryl Glenie 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
 - Parents
 - School Support Officers (SSOs)
 - Students
 - Teachers

School context

Para Vista Primary School caters for children from Preschool to Year 7. It is situated 16kms from the Adelaide CBD. The enrolment in 2019 is 222 students. There has been a steady decline in enrolments over the last 4 years. The school is classified as Category 4 on the Index of Educational Disadvantage. The school's ICSEA score is 972. The local partnership is Montague.

The school population includes 7% Aboriginal students, 10% students with a verified disability, 29% students of EALD background, 37% of families eligible for school card assistance and 4 children in care.

The school leadership team consists of a principal in the 1st year of her tenure at the school, an assistant principal primary years focus, an assistant principal early years focus and a Special Education student wellbeing counsellor. There are 18 teachers (2 in early career stages and 2 step 9) and 11 SSOs.

Previous ESR or OTE directions were:

- Direction 1** Raise learning achievement and growth for students by implementing an evidence-based whole school approach to literacy and numeracy that is implemented consistently and collaboratively to an embedded stage across the school.
- Direction 2** Collect and analyse school and classroom-based assessment data at regular intervals to monitor the effectiveness of agreed teaching strategies implemented across the school.
- Direction 3** Improve student achievement and growth across all areas of the Australian Curriculum by developing and implementing agreed differentiated teaching strategies in all classes across the school.
- Direction 4** Implement consistent performance and development practices to monitor the implementation of agreed teaching strategies and actions to lift student achievement and growth.

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

The school has made progress with implementation of the previous directions and it was recognised that a recent change in site leadership has advanced the process to be more targeted.

Previous work around implementing a whole-school approach to literacy and numeracy, with aspects such as literacy 'rotations', is evident across all year levels. A literacy agreement and action plans have been developed and guided reading introduced. In 2019 modelled reading is the focus for the school with targeted strategies to ensure consistency of practice.

The direction around the use of data has progressed and the impact at the class level is developing as teachers recognise it as a tool to support their planning. The focus on individualising the data (a face to the data) is developing amongst the staff and is now an integral part of performance development plans (PDPs).

The partnership learning design, assessment and moderation (LDAM) activities on intellectual stretch were the catalyst for the school to develop and implement agreed differentiated teaching within the school. Professional learning community (PLC) groups were held to examine differentiated practices with

teachers beginning to form literacy 'groups' within their classes. Many of the teachers interviewed indicated that further work in this area is needed.

In 2019 the PDP process has shifted from a broad approach to a targeted pedagogical focus, strongly linked to the SIP. Walk-through observations and follow-up formal meetings are conducted with the principal. A modified 3X3X3 approach to track, analyse and respond to student data to inform teacher practice against goals in literacy, referencing quality teaching, is the backbone of the PDP process. The current PDP process is well accepted by most staff with a recognised focus on high yield teaching strategies.

Lines of inquiry

EFFECTIVE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

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

It has been recognised that the school uses information from a variety of assessment data sets to support and plan for improved student learning. Structures and systems are in place for staff to readily access the achievement data through the Scorelink data collection system, student files and achievement folders.

All staff are aware of the 2019 school improvement plan (SIP) goals (modelled reading) and challenges of practice and recognise that the principal is channelling the professional learning and teaching practice to achieve these goals.

A school improvement team has been formed to keep momentum and connection with the SIP. A student review team has been established to address the learning of students at risk. The staff reviewed the literacy data schedule to streamline the data collection and make connections with the SIP focus.

Student achievement data is collated and folders are passed onto teachers annually for review. The sharing of achievement data with students is limited. By sharing this information, students will gain a clear picture about what they need to do to improve.

Processes are in place for the next step of planning and developing learning design and changes in teaching practice. The school uses evidence from student achievement and growth data to form the goals and targets for improvement and there is a strong emphasis on pedagogical development to up-skill teachers and leaders to raise student achievement. In building the capacity of all staff, a collaborative approach in analysing student data to identify strengths, gaps and trends to inform goals for improvement are the next steps for the school. The school has the opportunity to further explore the use of growth and effect size measures as an adjunct to the professional development focus to support numerical data and to inform judgements when planning learning programs. The school is suitably positioned to undertake this important work.

Direction 1 Enhance the school's internal self-review and quality assurance processes for the purpose of monitoring and reviewing student learning to raise student achievement.

EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND STUDENT LEARNING

How effectively are teachers using evidence-based pedagogical practices that engage and challenge all learners?

The introduction of the modelled reading strategy via English literacy blocks has been introduced as a daily function. It was reported and observed by the panel that this approach was engaging for all students.

The guided reading program is functioning and students are able to clearly articulate what they were learning through groups and understood the literacy block. This was confirmed by the parents interviewed.

Several teachers mentioned that running records data (R-7) is used to support the guided reading program and assists with their planning of ability groups and lesson intent. Jolly Phonics is used consistently in the early years classes.

The use of formative assessment and differentiated teaching practices varied amongst the staff. Most staff were able to speak about the assessments they used but acknowledged that learning intentions and success rubrics were still areas to work on.

Student wellbeing practices through the Play is the Way strategy are well known and used by all members of the school community. The school is now poised to use these practices to support classroom planning, as learning that is intentionally designed to challenge and stretch learners enhances their social and emotional wellbeing.

Processes are in place for the next step of further developing teacher capacity. It has been recognised that significant inroads have been achieved in a short period of time under the new leadership. With a focus on effective teaching for all learners, the next steps in the professional development processes are to develop a collective understanding of differentiated teaching, strengthen teacher understanding of student agency within the planning process and build on teacher knowledge and use of metacognition for learning. The current work on targeted professional learning, based on the SIP priorities and the implementation of learning agreements, has put the school in a good place to build on the collective capacity of all staff. By strengthening teacher knowledge in task design that involves students, it will further develop and embed effective and consistent pedagogical practice in curriculum planning across the school.

Direction 2 Build on the capacity of staff in the design of consistent teaching practices that link student learning from Preschool to Year 7 to include evidence-based data, student influence and intentional learning strategies.

EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP

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

From the principal's presentation it is evident that a culture of learning and high expectation within the classroom, across the school and the broader community is the aspiration of the principal.

Strategies for raising the profile of the school have been achieved by celebrating student learning through weekly assemblies, facebook postings and newsletters, creating the Student Learning Improvement Committee (SLIC), and involving the leadership team in classroom programs.

The principal has identified and organised professional development, staff training days and staff meetings based on SIP challenges of practice. Through clear line management structures, professional learning directions and support are collaboratively developed by leadership for the staff they manage. It is essential

that the leadership team are seen as equal partners in the professional learning actions to lead and guide the staff in quality planning and teaching.

The 2019 SIP challenges of practice identify evidence-based resources such as the Big 6 of reading and the literacy and numeracy guidebooks. These, along with the complementary work in formative assessment, form the basis of work for teachers to use in their understanding the 'how-to-teach' within their lesson task designs.

Staff acknowledged that class observations and immediate feedback on their programming and practices are highly valued. The staff recognise the link between the SIP goals and targets and the pedagogical focus to improve their teaching practice.

Effective leaders keep themselves and their staff informed of current research and theory and foster formal and informal discussions about teaching and learning. The school is ready to take the next steps in providing access to a variety of professional learning opportunities to create a continuously improving teaching pedagogy through the provision of high quality professional learning for teachers.

Direction 3 Create the conditions necessary to enable teachers to effectively engage and benefit from professional learning in the use of the Australian Curriculum and tailored teaching practices to maximise student learning growth.

Outcomes of the External School Review 2019

From the information gathered from teachers, students and parents the review panel identified a strength of the school is its community connection. The parents and staff have a high level of trust in the principal and that the school's aspiration to offer a quality education for their children is recognised and supported. The school community value the high level of consultation with the strength of this relationship involving ongoing open dialogue and commitment to working together. Students talked about the school as being a safe school environment – friendly, no bullying, supportive of each other.

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

- Direction 1** Enhance the school's internal self-review and quality assurance processes for the purpose of monitoring and reviewing student learning to raise student achievement.
- Direction 2** Build on the capacity of staff in the design of consistent teaching practices that link student learning from Preschool to Year 7 to include evidence-based data, student influence and intentional learning strategies.
- Direction 3** Create the conditions necessary to enable teachers to effectively engage and benefit from professional learning in the use of the Australian Curriculum and tailored teaching practices to maximise student learning growth.

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



Tony Lunniss
DIRECTOR
REVIEW, IMPROVEMENT AND
ACCOUNTABILITY



Anne Millard
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, PARTNERSHIPS,
SCHOOLS AND PRESCHOOLS

Sue Charleston
PRINCIPAL
PARA VISTA PRIMARY SCHOOL

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 2018, 66% of year 1 and 57% of year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA.

Between 2016 and 2018 the trend for year 1 has been upwards from 31% to 66% and for year 2 minimal change from 60% to 57% respectively.

In 2018 the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 69% of year 3 students, 53% of year 5 students and 50% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement under the SEA. For year 3 this result represents an improvement, for year 5, little or no change, and for year 7, a decline, from the historic baseline average.

Between 2016 and 2018 the trend for year 5 has been upwards, from 48% to 53% respectively.

In 2018, 31% of year 3, 27% of year 5 and 10% 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, 75%, or 3 out of 4 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5 in 2018, and 50%, or 1 out of 2 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 71% of year 3 students, 73% of year 5 students and 50% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For year 3 and 5 this result represents an improvement and for year 7, a decline, from the historic baseline average.

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

In 2018, 20% of year 3, 7% of year 5 and 15% of year 7 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN numeracy bands. For year 3, this result represents an improvement from the historic baseline average.

Between 2016 and 2018, the trend for year 3 and 7 has been upwards from 5% to 20% for year 3 and 3% to 15% for year 7 respectively.

For those students who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in numeracy, no students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5 in 2018 and 50%, or 1 out of 2 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7 in 2018.