

Department for Education

External School Review

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

Report for Brighton Primary School

Conducted in March 2020



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 Phil Garner, Review Officer of the department's Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate and Wendy Moore and Nathan Taylor, Review Principals.

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
- Scan of Aboriginal Education Strategy implementation
- Discussions with:
 - Aboriginal Community Engagement Officer (ACEO)
 - Governing Council representatives
 - Leaders
 - Parent groups
 - School Support Officers (SSOs)
 - Student groups
 - Teachers

School context

Brighton Primary School and Centre for Deaf Education caters for children from reception to year 7. It is situated 14km from the Adelaide CBD. The enrolment in 2020 is 724 students. Enrolment at the time of the previous review was 648. The local partnership is Holdfast.

The school has an ICSEA score of 923 and is classified as Category 6 on the Department for Education Index of Educational Disadvantage.

The school population includes 1% Aboriginal students, 5% students with disabilities, 11% students with English as an additional language or dialect (EALD) background, 2 young people in care and 11% of families are eligible for School Card assistance.

The school leadership team consists of a principal who is in the 4th year of their tenure, a deputy principal, assistant principal (STAR/Intervention), assistant principal (CDE) and assistant principal (STEM/Numeracy, Leader Band 1, Writing Focus).

There are 51 teachers including 1 in the early years of their career and 13 Step 9 teachers.

The previous ESR or OTE directions were:

- Direction 1** Raise student achievement levels by designing learning that provides challenge for all learners with opportunities to use critical and creative thinking and demonstrate higher-order thinking skills.
- Direction 2** Ensure continuity of learning for all students by refining and documenting a coherent Reception to Year 7 approach to teaching and learning that includes specific measures of success, led by aspirational targets.
- Direction 3** Motivate students to higher levels of achievement by strengthening the practices of sharing learning intentions with students, including transparent success criteria aligned to the Australian Curriculum Achievement Standards, to deepen students' authentic influence, and develop goal-setting for improvement in personal learning.
- Direction 4** Improve the parent-school partnership by developing a whole-school communication and parent engagement strategy which is consistently applied.

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

Direction 1

The school has adopted a framework of student learning dispositions which identify 4 stages towards being an independent learner. Students could clearly articulate what each stage means and how they can improve. The appointment of a key leader in STEM is providing opportunities for students to be challenged in their thinking. However the panel has evidenced variability across classes with some students identifying less than challenging learning tasks.

Direction 2

Although teachers identified the need to enhance collaboration and sharing between year levels to improve consistency and transition, there has been limited progress with this direction.

Direction 3

The use of learning intentions and success criteria is variable across the school. However, where they are used, students are motivated, engaged and can clearly articulate their learning. Early years classes conduct 1:1 feedback/goal setting conferences with students and the panel observed effective use of success criteria in upper primary classes. With positive examples of good practice across the school there exists an opportunity to further embed these practices across R-7.

Direction 4

Parents with whom the panel met indicated that communication in terms of curriculum assessment and feedback has generally improved over time. However, they have concerns regarding inconsistencies between classes and year levels. It was noted that digital technology is an R-7 agreed resource for use in communication and parent engagement, however, implementation and consistency varies considerably across the school.

Lines of inquiry

EFFECTIVE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

How well does the school review and evaluate the effectiveness of improvement planning processes and the impact on student learning to inform next steps?

The school has enacted equitable strategies that have enabled all staff to participate in the development and review of the site improvement plan (SIP). There exists a sense of ownership and affirmation of the challenges of practice with an understanding they should be firmly based on developing whole-school agreements, approaches and practices within each of the three improvement priorities. As a matter of urgency the school will need to develop and implement R-7 agreements and approaches in literacy and numeracy that will provide direction and ensure a measure of consistency in teaching and learning. These should include responsibilities and protocols for the teachers who share responsibility for hearing-impaired students.

The adoption of an evidence-based approach to the teaching of writing in 2019 was aimed at improving the quality of outcomes in student writing across R-7. However, the review and evaluation of this is a compilation of initiatives that have occurred over the course of the year with little focus or reflection on their impact on student learning. The panel did observe pockets of good practice across the school where teachers have implemented monitoring strategies to track student growth. However, multiple measures of student achievement will need to be effectively and consistently implemented throughout the year and across the whole school to ensure ongoing monitoring of actions and strategies and their effect on student growth and achievement. As the self-review cycle evolves, opportunities to include student voice in this process will emerge and will need to be carefully considered.

There is evidence of teachers' performance development planning goals being aligned to the SIP challenges of practice, in particular writing. However, with an indirect focus on student achievement and the absence of measurable outcomes it is challenging to quantify the improvement in teacher performance and student learning.

The school is well positioned to implement not only strategic and measurable monitoring strategies to track improvement in teaching and learning, but also to ensure consistent and collaborative whole-of-school commitment and accountability measures that will drive the school's improvement agenda.

Direction 1 **Collectively identify and respond to the impact of actions on student learning through the application and analysis of regular and ongoing multiple measures of data.**

EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND STUDENT LEARNING

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

The school has access to a wide variety of student achievement data that has the potential, when used effectively, to identify where students are in their learning and where they need to be. However, the reference to student achievement data to influence the design and differentiation of learning is inconsistent across year levels and classes.

There are pockets of effective practice across the school, including a strong early-years focus on moderating student writing including moderation walls, exemplars and criteria for student self-assessment. However, there is a need to develop an R-7 collective understanding of the moderation process that will enable consistency of practice to extend student learning beyond the basic level.

The strategic implementation of a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics and grammar is a result of the analysis of student achievement data providing opportunities for teachers to differentiate the learning for students.

While the panel observed the use of formative feedback strategies to guide student learning in some classes, there exists wide variability in the use of formative feedback and assessment strategies throughout the school. The panel observed unfinished and unassessed learning in some classes with students indicating little understanding of how they can improve beyond writing more or writing more neatly. Some students with whom the panel met identified limited challenge in their learning with differentiation that sees low achieving students struggling with some learning tasks and high achieving students repeating tasks and concepts that they have already mastered.

Limited opportunities exist for students to engage with their achievement data or to self-assess, peer assess, share or moderate their own learning. Students believe that an opportunity to do so would provide them with greater ownership and a better understanding of where they are in their learning and what the next steps might be.

There are examples of effective teaching practices across the school which provide students with ongoing formative feedback and assessment and engage them effectively in their learning. An opportunity exists to replicate these practices school-wide through improved professional collaboration and observation processes.

Direction 2 Provide differentiated learning tasks that cater for next steps in student learning by analysing and responding to student data and developing a clear understanding of how formative feedback and assessment can support and improve the achievement of all students.

EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND STUDENT LEARNING

To what extent is there coherence, continuity and progression of learning across the years of schooling?

All classes have embraced narrative writing as a whole-school initiative. This approach is providing teachers with consistency in the teaching of narrative writing across the school. Students indicated the focus on writing has increased their engagement, improved their writing skills and is providing greater challenges in writing. Similar consistent approaches are being implemented across early-years classes with the implementation of phonics and grammar programs.

The school has developed a comprehensive whole school writing agreement that sequences the teaching and learning of R-7 writing in all genres. However, there is little evidence to suggest that this document is being utilised in the teaching of writing across the school. The school will need to promote expectations and accountability measures to ensure this document is effectively and consistently embedded across all year levels and classes.

Year level professional learning teams have been established throughout the school. In the early years, there was evidence of highly effective collaboration between teachers with consistency in planning and programming that sequences the teaching and learning and ensures collective ownership, clear expectations and accountability for everyone. Student learning is at the centre of their planning and reviewing with high expectations for student growth and achievement. However, while this approach provides opportunities to improve the consistency of pedagogy and curriculum delivery within classes in the same year level, it can promote an insular approach that limits the awareness of teaching and learning in other sections of the school inhibiting the continuity of student learning from year to year.

Teachers and parents with whom the panel spoke identified the need to develop a consistent whole-school approach to the sequencing of learning across all curriculum areas to ensure consistency of practice, equity of access and continuity of learning for all students. The panel sees this as an opportunity for the school to focus on engaging collaboratively on curriculum understanding, design and implementation.

Direction 3 Collaboratively develop a consistent whole school approach to the sequencing of learning across all curriculum areas by focusing on curriculum understanding, design and implementation.

Outcomes of the External School Review 2019

The school has shown a strong commitment to the education of hearing impaired students. Students are fully integrated into mainstream classes supported by a teacher of the deaf, a bilingual school support officer and the mainstream class teacher working in collaboration. Auslan is the language of choice for the school with all students and many staff learning the language. Parents are supportive of the school and the commitment of the leadership team and teachers to the education of their children.

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

- Direction 1** Collectively identify and respond to the impact of actions on student learning through the application and analysis of regular and ongoing multiple measures of data.
- Direction 2** Provide differentiated learning tasks that cater for next steps in student learning by analysing and responding to student data and developing a clear understanding of how formative feedback and assessment can support and improve the achievement of all students.
- Direction 3** Collaboratively develop a consistent whole school approach to the sequencing of learning across all curriculum areas by focusing on curriculum understanding, design and implementation.

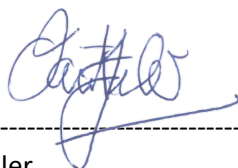
Based on the school's current performance, Brighton Primary School will be externally reviewed again in 2023.



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PRINCIPAL
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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 2019, 73% of year 1 and 79% of year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. This result represents an improvement from the historic baseline average.

Between 2017 and 2019, the trend for year 2 has been upwards from 57% to 79%.

In 2019, the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 84% of year 3 students, 81% of year 5 students and 82% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For years 3 and 7, this result represents little or no change and for year 5, an improvement from the historic baseline average.

For 2019, year 3, 5 and 7 NAPLAN reading, the school is achieving within the results of similar students across government schools.

In 2019, 37% of year 3, 29% of year 5 and 26% 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 in 2019 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in reading, 65%, or 17 out of 26 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5 and 40%, or 12 out of 30 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7.

Numeracy

In 2019, the numeracy results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 85% of year 3 students, 85% of year 5 students and 85% 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 little or no change, from the historic baseline average.

For 2019, year 3, NAPLAN numeracy, the school is achieving within, and for years 5 and 7 above, the results of similar groups of students across government schools.

In 2019, 34% of year 3, 15% of year 5 and 30% 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.

For those students in 2019 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in numeracy, 60%, or 11 out of 19 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5 and 67%, or 12 out of 18 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7.