

DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
OFFICE FOR EDUCATION AND EARLY CHILDHOOD

EXTERNAL SCHOOL REVIEW

REPORT FOR GLEN OSMOND PRIMARY

Conducted in November 2015



**Government
of South Australia**

Department for Education
and Child Development

Review details

A priority for the Department for Education and Child Development (DECD) is to improve the educational attainment and wellbeing of South Australia's children and young people.

The purpose of the External School Review is to support schools to raise achievement, sustain high performance and to provide quality assurance to build and sustain public confidence in DECD schools.

The overarching review question is "How well does this school improve student achievement, growth, challenge, engagement and equity?"

This External School Review has evaluated:

- *the school's self-review processes and findings,*
- *the school's achievement data and progress over time,*
- *the outcomes of the meetings and interviews with representatives from the school, and*
- *parent and student views about the school.*

The External School Review included an analysis of the school's key policies and procedures.

The support and cooperation provided by the staff and school community is acknowledged.

This External School Review was conducted by Linda Olifent, Review Officer, Review, Improvement and Accountability and Ros Frost, Review Principal.

Policy compliance

The External School Review process includes verification by the Principal that key DECD policies are implemented and adhered to.

The Principal of Glen Osmond has verified that the school is working towards being compliant in all applicable DECD policies. The Principal advised action is being taken to comply with the following DECD policies:

- Parent Complaint Policy
- Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Volunteer Policy
- Child Protection Curriculum
- Attendance Improvement Plan
- Guidelines for Work Experience

Implementation of the *DECD Student Attendance Policy* was checked specifically against a documented set of criteria. The school has implemented comprehensive tracking and intervention processes, and was found to be compliant with this policy. In 2014, the school reported attendance of 93.8%, which exceeds the DECD target of 93%.

School context

Glen Osmond Primary School is an inner metropolitan school situated 5 kilometres from the Adelaide GPO. Enrolments have remained stable with 330 students. The school has an ICSEA score of 1127, and is classified as Category 7 on the DECD Index of Educational Disadvantage.

The school population includes 1% Aboriginal students, 2% Students with Disabilities, 6% students with English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EALD), 1 student is under the Guardianship of the Minister (GoM) and 10% of families are eligible for School Card assistance.

The school leadership team consists of a Principal, who will begin her second tenure in 2016, a Deputy Principal, and a Coordinator of Innovative Pedagogies.

Lines of inquiry

During the review process, the panel focused on three key areas from the External School Review Framework:

Student learning:	How well are students achieving over time? To what extent are students engaged and intellectually challenged in their learning?
Effective teaching:	How well do teachers use data to design, assess and differentiate the learning for students?
Effective leadership/ Improvement agenda:	How does the school know that its professional learning and performance development processes are effective in building teacher capacity?

How well are students achieving over time?

In the early years, reading achievement is monitored against Running Records. An analysis of achievement (based on Running Records) through Years 1 and 2, from 2011 to 2014, indicates that an average of 77% of Year 1 students achieved the expected DECD Standard of Educational Achievement (SEA) and, at Year 2, 88% achieved the SEA. In 2015, 66% of Year 1 and 91% of Year 2 achieved the SEA or above.

The reading achievement over the last seven years (as measured by NAPLAN), shows an average of 88% of Year 3, 88% of Year 5, and 92% of Year 7 students at, or above, the SEA. In 2015, 93% of Year 3, 88% of Year 5, and 97% of Year 7 students achieved the SEA. An improvement trend is particularly evident in Year 7, over the last three years.

The 2015 NAPLAN student progress in reading, from Year 3 to 5, between 2013 and 2015, showed 41% made upper and 49% middle progress. From Year 5 to 7, 43% made upper and 43% middle progress. The standard average growth rates are 25% upper, 50% middle, and 25% lower progress.

In relation to the percentage of students who achieved in the higher reading bands (as measured by NAPLAN) over the last 7 years, there was, on average, 60% at Year 3, 46% at Year 5, and 48% at Year 7. In 2015, 40% of Year 3, 55% of Year 5, and 34% of Year 7 students achieved in the higher bands. In addition, 77% of Year 5 students remained in the higher bands from Year 3, and 77% of Year 7 students remained in the higher bands from Year 3.

The numeracy achievement over the last seven years (as measured by NAPLAN), shows an average of 87% of Year 3, 83% of Year 5, and 91% of Year 7 students at, or above, the SEA. In 2015, 80% of Year 3, 90% of Year 5, and 91% of Year 7 students achieved the SEA.

The 2015 NAPLAN student progress in numeracy, from Year 3 to 5, between 2013 and 2015, showed 32% made upper and 54% middle progress. From Year 5 to 7, 39% made upper and 50% middle progress.

In relation to the percentage of students who achieved in the higher numeracy bands (as measured by NAPLAN) over the last 7 years, there was, on average, 39% at Year 3, 29% at Year 5, and 44% at Year 7. In 2015, 35% of Year 3, 28% of Year 5, and 25% of Year 7 students achieved in the higher bands. In addition, 58% of Year 5 students remained in the higher bands from Year 3, and 71% of Year 7 students remained in the higher bands from Year 3.

Overall, growth rates are positive between Year 3 to 5, and Year 5 to 7, in reading and numeracy. The challenge for the school is to increase the number of students in the higher bands for reading and numeracy and retain them at these levels as they progress through the school.

To what extent are students engaged and intellectually challenged in their learning?

Students at Glen Osmond Primary School have a strong desire to learn and succeed. There is a sense of pride and appreciation of the size of the school being smaller than surrounding schools. The student population is stable with most students attending the school since Reception. Teachers positively acknowledge the high social competence of the children and their engagement in all school activities. A vast array of curriculum and extra-curricular opportunities were described and highly regarded by the students and staff. These include: school musical, choirs, assemblies, sports and clinics, Learning Journey night, 'A Moment in Time' program, art, drama, kitchen garden program, French Poetry Competition, and leadership opportunities. Parents agreed that the students are provided with rich experiences within and outside the classroom and viewed this as part of the positive culture of the school. The Governing Council Education and Wellbeing Sub-Committee is proactive in working with the school to sustain and further develop these opportunities. The school is to be commended for the positive culture through which a broad range of learning experiences for students are readily available.

There was clarity amongst students across year levels that a strong focus on anti-bullying exists and the parents generally confirmed that they had confidence in the behaviour management strategies and conflict resolution processes used by the school.

The Review Panel was particularly interested in the extent to which the school provides opportunities for students to be engaged in intellectually challenging learning and the development of high-level skills. Groups of students from Year 3 to 7 provided samples of assessed pieces of work for discussion. It was noted that the level of challenge varied significantly between classes. There was some evidence of higher level thinking skills and the incorporation of ICT being integrated into units of work in the upper sections of the school. Assessment checklists were common across year levels, however, the use of rubrics in the upper primary was described by the students as being more useful in helping them to improve.

Students expressed a desire to be challenged and some articulated what it meant to have a growth mindset. There was agreement across year levels that there was an expectation to complete the learning task regardless of prior knowledge, and then extension work could be requested; other options were to complete unfinished work or read. In the classrooms, although the Review Panel observed students engaged in different tasks with varying degrees of complexity, the students, particularly in the middle primary, reported not being challenged. Access to ICT and the range of digital technologies used in learning programs was raised as an area for improvement by both students and teachers.

The students described their teachers as calm, supportive, easy to approach and talk to, and with expectations that students would try their best. There was little evidence that students were asked to provide feedback to teachers on the learning programs.

Direction 1

Increase the challenge and engagement of students by developing learning tasks which are rigorous, have greater intellectual challenge and, where appropriate, incorporate the use of ICT.

Direction 2

Incorporate feedback processes to and from students to establish prior learning, and to involve them in goal-setting and review of their progress.

How well do teachers use data to design, assess and differentiate the learning for students?

Teachers' understanding of strategies to cater for individual differences, and the alignment of support mechanisms in a coherent fashion, are pivotal improvement strategies to meet the explicit needs of students.

Literacy, in particular Reading, has been a school priority and the school has invested heavily in the employment of an experienced Literacy Coach and has begun a process of updating reading resources. Leadership confirmed that the Literacy Coach role will be maintained during 2016.

A range of data is collected by class teachers according to the school's assessment schedule. A designated room has been organised to display data and, initially, this has included the reading Running Records and PAT R achievement and progress results. Teachers described this as a positive development and the plan is to further develop this concept. Individual student record folders are also in the process of being developed to assist in programming and in the transition of information between teachers.

Teachers meet with the Literacy Coach and Deputy Principal to develop an understanding of the data and, mostly, use this to identify students who require intervention and support. The Waves of Intervention model has been adopted across the school and during the planning meeting, Wave 1, 2 and 3 documents are collaboratively completed for individual students. Specific intervention programs are scheduled, such as Multilit for identified students. The Literacy Coach suggests resources and instructional ideas for classroom teachers to improve student learning outcomes.

It was reported by teachers that the data had assisted in the grouping of students for particular programs, for example, guided reading. However, there was little evidence to support a coherent and deep understanding of teachers R-7, in the creation of rigorous learning programs, particularly to support the more capable students.

Teachers are familiar with planning using the Australian Curriculum. Samples of student learning tasks indicated a varied approach to design and assessment, and less understanding of the Teaching for Effective Learning framework. The range of A-E grades in some learning areas indicates that a review of how students can demonstrate high-level learning is needed.

Direction 3

Increase the proportion of students retained in the Higher Proficiency Bands in NAPLAN and Achievement Standards in the Australian Curriculum by further building the capacity of teachers to use data and evidence to collaboratively design teaching and learning programs to meet the varied learning needs of students. Work collaboratively with internal and external expertise to achieve this outcome.

How does the school know that its professional learning and performance and development processes are effective in building teacher capacity?

The leadership team presented evidence of comprehensive self-review processes used by the school. Extensive data has been collected and analysed to inform continuous improvement. The school recognises that their challenge is to raise the number and percentage of students retained in the Higher Proficiency Bands in NAPLAN and the Australian Curriculum Achievement Standards. The Professional Development program has been tailored to the identified needs and future directions of the school. Examples include workshops with Sheena Cameron (Reading Comprehension) and Ann Baker (Mathematics).

The school has funded a part-time Literacy Coach to build the capacity of staff in Literacy teaching, and this has included being available to work in the classroom alongside teachers. Teachers have been provided with release time to analyse data and plan teaching and learning programs.

A challenge reported to the panel across the school was the interruption to the Literacy and Numeracy program by a number of school events, such as sports clinics. The panel would encourage the school to review timetables to ensure high-level participation by students in core learning areas, and maximum opportunities for external expertise (e.g. Literacy Coach, Curriculum Coordinators) to be involved at a classroom level. There needs to be alignment between the strategic, operational and classroom planning, with a focus on creating coherence and connectivity across all year levels.

The Site Improvement Plan describes the priority areas for the school. The panel noted that a Literacy policy/agreement exists but there was a lack of knowledge and commitment to this by teachers. Documentation needs to be revisited and adapted to be specific in nature and include continual monitoring and reviewing processes by leadership and Learning Teams to drive improvement. The panel heard that a similar document will be developed for Numeracy in 2016.

Performance and development processes need to be constructed to balance the priorities of the school and the needs of the individual teacher. The combination of teacher self-reflections, professional learning, and constructive feedback from leadership, based on classroom observations and professional discussions, will further develop the capacity of teachers and ensure curriculum agreements are implemented.

Direction 4

Develop and enact systematic performance and development processes to ensure high-level adherence and consistency across the school to the priorities of the Site Improvement Plan and school Literacy and Numeracy agreements.

OUTCOMES OF EXTERNAL SCHOOL REVIEW 2015

Glen Osmond Primary School is tracking well. The school is continuing to develop a strong improvement agenda, including an increased strategic use of achievement data for classroom planning.

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

- 1. Increase the challenge and engagement of students by developing learning tasks which are rigorous, have greater intellectual challenge and, where appropriate, incorporate the use of ICT.**
- 2. Incorporate feedback processes to and from students to establish prior learning, and to involve them in goal-setting and review of their progress.**
- 3. Increase the proportion of students retained in the Higher Proficiency Bands in NAPLAN and Achievement Standards in the Australian Curriculum by further building the capacity of teachers to use data and evidence to collaboratively design teaching and learning programs to meet the varied learning needs of students. Work collaboratively with internal and external expertise to achieve this outcome.**
- 4. Develop and enact systematic performance and development processes to ensure high-level adherence and consistency across the school to the priorities of the Site Improvement Plan and school Literacy and Numeracy agreements.**

Based on the school's current performance, Glen Osmond Primary School will be externally reviewed again in 2019.