

Department for Education

External School Review

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

Report for Wandana Primary School

Conducted in November 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 Tanya Oshinsky, Review Officer of the department's Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate and Leanne Prior, Review Principal.

Review Process

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

- Presentation from the principal
- Class visits
- Staff meeting activity
- Document analysis
- Scan of Aboriginal Education Strategy implementation
- Discussions with:
 - Aboriginal Community Engagement Officer (ACEO)
 - Governing Council representatives
 - Leaders
 - Parent group
 - School Services Officers (SSOs)
 - Student groups
 - Teachers

School context

Wandana Primary School caters for children from preschool to year 7. It is situated 12kms from the Adelaide CBD. The enrolment in 2019 is 139. Enrolment at the time of the previous review was 140. The local partnership is Torrens.

The school has an ICSEA score of 898, and is classified as Category 2 on the Department for Education Index of Educational Disadvantage.

The school population includes 29% Aboriginal students, 31% students with disabilities, 38% students with English as an additional language or dialect (EALD) background, 5% children/young people in care and 65% of families eligible for School Card assistance.

The school leadership team consists of a principal in the fourth year of their tenure, a deputy principal and a student wellbeing leader.

There are 16 teachers including 3 preschool teachers, 4 teachers in the early years of their career and 7 Step 9 teachers.

The previous ESR or OTE directions were:

- Direction 1** Embed the agreed and defined pedagogical approaches that support 'challenge and stretch' for all learners across the school through staff collaborative endeavour.
- Direction 2** Improve the learning growth and engagement of every student through planning, designing and differentiating teaching to cater for the varying skills and interests of all students.
- Direction 3** Build teacher capacity through strategic leadership actions that support and influence a clear school focus on improvement and high expectations.
- Direction 4** Raise achievement levels through the collection and analysis of various data to track, monitor and target support for learners.

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

Leaders at Wandana Primary School have strategically addressed the previous directions by primarily attending to culture, in order to lay the solid foundations required for staff to work collaboratively in striving for improvement. Staff reaffirmed that the development of a positive teaching and learning culture, evident at the time of the review, has taken time. The panel noted a high regard for leaders from all stakeholders and a respectful productive interaction amongst colleagues. Teachers work collegially and share practice in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) which is a recent and significant shift, welcomed by all.

Over time, teachers have developed skills in collecting and analysing summative data to inform practice. Professional learning in formative assessment practices, since the previous review, now underpins current work in identifying and integrating high impact teaching strategies into teaching and learning. Whole-school programs introduced, such as Read Write Inc., are highly valued by staff for their explicit teaching and building consistency and coherence of practice across classes. Numeracy has been on the improvement agenda for some time and improved student outcomes in most datasets is evident.

There is ongoing work to be achieved in response to the previous directions and attention to this is evidenced in the current Site Improvement Plan (SIP). The panel determined that the professional learning culture that now exists and places the school well for continuing their improvement journey.

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?

A number of evaluative review measures are facilitated by leaders and have been successful in connecting teachers to the SIP and their work within it. School Services Officers (SSOs) have been involved in some processes, however engaging governing council, SSOs and students authentically in improvement processes will be future work for the school. Teachers have aligned their Performance and Development Plans (PDPs) to the SIP and are actively engaged in either the writing or numeracy focus.

Opportunities for teachers to build capacity and take on leadership roles are provided through a variety of site improvement structures, including a representative from each level of schooling on the Review and Planning (RAP) group. This group meets fortnightly with leaders to monitor SIP actions and outcomes in order to plan forward. Staff representatives on the Site Improvement Team (SIT) review the learning needs of identified students and intervention required. Three teachers nominated as 'PLC Pillars' and facilitate PLCs to ensure conversations are rigorous, on task and have the required resources.

Learning sprints, as short trials of improvement strategies, have been the main impetus for change to teaching practice. Teachers are highly engaged in learning sprints and feel well supported by their colleagues and leaders. Preschool and specialist teachers add to the collective journey by aligning their sprints to the priorities of the school within their learning environments. This work can be further enhanced by evolving PLCs to be platforms for constructive critical evaluation of direct impact from teaching strategies on measurable student outcomes. This evaluative process will enable teachers to adjust their practice to ensure the greatest impact, through identifying effective high yield teaching strategies that can be amplified across classrooms. This will then inform the upcoming pedagogical agreement and highlight the skills and knowledge that all staff need for deeper implementation and the embedding of high impact practices across the curriculum. The panel noted positivity from all teachers about their current work that has laid a strong foundation for further momentum.

Direction 1 **Strengthen the teaching and learning in all classrooms, through PLC processes that critically evaluate and measure trialled and refined pedagogical practices, to amplify and embed those that have the most impact on student outcomes.**

EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND STUDENT LEARNING

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

Teachers expressed confidence in collecting and analysing data to cater for students' learning needs. A data schedule is in place, however ongoing tracking, monitoring and responding to individual student achievement was not evident. SSOs do not engage with data or assessments when supporting students, as they are mostly directed in their work by teachers.

Formative assessment practices identified included feedback, reflection, check-ins and questioning. While feedback is either during or after learning, teachers are aware that feedback has greater impact during the task. Learning intentions and success criteria, or variations of the strategy and language, are implemented in varying degrees across most classrooms. Students could more clearly describe the task for learning, rather than why they were learning it or how they would know if they were successful. The panel felt that developing a Wandana language for learning would better support students in articulating their learning as they move through the school. Deeper implementation of all identified high impact teaching strategies is ongoing work.

Discussions around A-E grading with teachers highlighted some misconceptions and that tasks do not always provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate higher grades. Teachers acknowledged that sharing assessment with students about their learning is an area for growth. Students generally knew how they were going through reports, test scores or because their teacher told them. Teachers unpacking assessments with students so that they understand what they know and what they need to know is a high impact teaching strategy to develop and vital for students to be able to benchmark their learning. Once students understand their learning progression, their next step will be to set explicit individual learning goals. This is a significant body of work for the school to undertake and essential in building student agency.

Rich task design that provides differentiated learning opportunities that engage, stretch and challenge students daily, was not evidenced by the panel. Strengthening teaching and learning cycles where rich task design is data informed, assessment is inclusive of students and moderation not only identifies consistency in grading but also evaluates whether tasks provide students with opportunity to demonstrate higher levels of learning, is essential to designing learning that continuously stretches students.

Direction 2 **Improve student outcomes by strengthening pedagogical practices through rich task design, assessment and moderation cycles that integrate high impact teaching strategies, to differentiate the learning and provide stretch and challenge for all students daily.**

Direction 3 **Develop student agency by regularly sharing assessment with students and embedding timely formative assessment and feedback practices that enable students to benchmark their learning and become self-drivers in their own learning.**

CONDITIONS FOR EFFECTIVE STUDENT LEARNING

To what extent are all students, including Aboriginal students and other priority groups, achieving in their learning?

Building awareness of Aboriginal perspectives for staff is intentional work of the school and is still developing. The Aboriginal Team speak passionately about current programs and the increased connectivity of Aboriginal students and their families to the school. The school is about to embark on a program (a joint government venture of four Australian states) involving modules designed to develop a shared position for supporting the learning of Aboriginal students and in recognising Aboriginal English as a language. This should be significant work in shifting current skills and understandings.

A greater understanding exists for accommodating special needs students and students impacted by trauma. Teachers spoke of classroom routines and actions that ensure students are settled and ready for learning each day.

Developing One Plan documents for special needs students, EALD learners and other priority groups is new learning for teachers. Future iterations of One Plans need to be inclusive of students and their families, and all staff working with them. SSOs' understanding of data and informing students and their families of ongoing assessment and learning, are pivotal to authentic engagement in One Plan development and regular review processes. Working in partnership is crucial to developing an inclusive environment.

In order to provide differentiated learning, deeper analysis of data for specific cohorts to address their needs, valuing Aboriginal culture and having high expectations for all learners is required. It is noted that cross-curricular and Aboriginal perspectives, connections to student experiences and adjustments for One Plan students are all identified as expected practice in the school's literacy and numeracy agreements.

Direction 4 **Improve learner progress for all students, in particular Aboriginal students and other priority groups, by building cultural understandings, having high expectations and tracking, monitoring and responding to the varied needs of learners.**

Outcomes of the External School Review 2019

Leaders' focus on building a collegial and collaborative culture at Wandana Primary School and establishing clear structures, has resulted in greater connectivity of teachers to the Site Improvement Plan and genuine attention to the improvement agenda. Leaders continue to identify future work that will richly support the integrated site of mainstream and special classes, immersed within a diverse community. Aligning the improvement work of the preschool will build foundations for children as they transition into the school sector. Connection between the school's improvement agenda, and that of the partnership, provides additional support and resourcing for successful outcomes. Staff at Wandana Primary School are dedicated professionals who genuinely want to cater for the varied needs of their learners.

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

- Direction 1** Strengthen the teaching and learning in all classrooms, through PLC processes that critically evaluate and measure trialled and refined pedagogical practices, to amplify and embed those that have the most impact on student outcomes.
- Direction 2** Improve student outcomes by strengthening pedagogical practices through rich task design, assessment and moderation cycles that integrate high impact teaching strategies, to differentiate the learning and provide stretch and challenge for all students daily.
- Direction 3** Develop student agency by regularly sharing assessment with students and embedding timely formative assessment and feedback practices that enable students to benchmark their learning and become self-drivers in their own learning.
- Direction 4** Improve learner progress for all students, in particular Aboriginal students and other priority groups, by building cultural understandings, having high expectations and tracking, monitoring and responding to the varied needs of learners.

Based on the school's current performance, Wandana 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, 19% of year 1 and 41% of year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. This result represents a decline for year 1, and little or no change for year 2 from the historic baseline average.

Between 2016 and 2018, the trend for year 1 has been downwards, from 47% to 19%.

In 2019, the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 55% of year 3 students, 53% of year 5 students and 64% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For years 3 and 5, this result represents little or no change, and for year 7 this represents an improvement from the historic baseline average.

Between 2017 and 2019, the trend for year 7 has been upwards, from 53% to 64%.

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

In 2019, 18% of year 3, 18% of year 5 and 14% of year 7 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN reading bands. For year 3, this result represents little or no change from the historic baseline average.

For those students in 2019 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in reading, 40%, or 2 out of 5 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5, and 50%, or 2 out of 4 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7.

Numeracy

In 2019, the numeracy results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 46% of year 3 students, 35% of year 5 students and 64% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For years 3 and 5, this result represents a decline, and for year 7 this represents an improvement from the historic baseline average.

Between 2017 and 2019, the trend for year 7 has been upwards, from 53% to 64%.

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

In 2019, 9% of year 3, 12% of year 5 and 21% 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, 100%, or 1 out of 1 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5, and 100%, or 1 out of 1 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7.