

Department for Education

External School Review

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

Report for Elizabeth Grove Primary School

Conducted in November 2019



Government of South Australia
Department for Education

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 Julie Bishop, Review Officer of the department's Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate and Michele Russell Review Principal.

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 Education Teacher (AET)
 - Aboriginal Community Engagement Officer (ACEO)
 - Governing Council representatives
 - Leaders
 - Parent groups
 - School Services Officers (SSOs)
 - Student groups
 - Teachers

School context

Elizabeth Grove Primary School caters for students from preschool to year 7. It is situated 25kms from the Adelaide CBD. The enrolment in 2019 is 300 students. Enrolment at the time of the previous review was 260. The local partnership is Elizabeth.

The school is classified as Category 1 on the Department for Education Index of Educational Disadvantage.

The school population includes 17% Aboriginal students, 40% students with disabilities, 35% students with English as an additional language or dialect (EALD) background, 3% students in care and an ICSEA score of 895 in 2018.

The school leadership team consists of a principal in the 2nd year of their 2nd tenure, 2 Band 2 senior leaders, one with responsibilities for student wellbeing and behaviour education, and the second leader with responsibilities for curriculum/administration. An additional leader undertakes responsibilities as the leader of learning.

There are 24.6FTE teachers including 11 in the early years of their career and 3 Step 9 teachers. The school also has a highly accomplished teacher (HAT) and a LEAD teacher.

The previous ESR or OTE directions were:

- Direction 1** Ensure all students are challenged and successful as learners, against their own goals and targets, by providing support and feedback that will motivate them to progress towards and beyond the SEA and celebrate learning with others.
- Direction 2** Guarantee that a coherent Reception to year 7 curriculum is designed and delivered by collaboratively planning, teaching and assessing the essential knowledge, skills and capabilities included in the Australian Curriculum.

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

The principal provided extensive evidence of work undertaken in goal setting and learner feedback, including the school developing a whole-school culture of learning within a safe environment. Staff have undertaken professional learning in informed trauma practices which has provided the site with a common language to strengthen self-regulating behaviours. The development of a learning code has provided a common language to embed the school ethos across the community. The principal noted that this has enhanced a stronger sense of belonging for staff and students. The school has also focused on sharing learning data and growth with the students. Learning goals in reading have been developed and staff have undertaken professional learning in SMARTAR goal development. Reporting processes have provided the opportunity for students to share learning and progress with families.

Professional Learning Teams (PLTs) are currently developing curriculum overviews for each term. Formative assessment is an embedded part of practice and intentional planning with a focus on capabilities has been progressed. The Site Improvement Plan (SIP) has a narrow focus which has provided a greater sense of purpose as reflected in the SIP actions. Greater collegiality, collaboration and commitment to embedding formative assessment, improving planning and the development of

intentional intervention strategies have developed as a result. The assessment and reporting framework includes expectations in relation to formative assessment.

The school has provided extensive evidence of significant progress in the implementation and embedding of the previous directions.

Lines of inquiry

EFFECTIVE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

How effectively does the school monitor and enhance its improvement strategies and actions based on their impact on student learning?

The leadership team is to be commended for the comprehensive improvement agenda that the school has undertaken. Staff work collaboratively and strategically in the analysis of data to inform SIP priorities. Roles and responsibilities in relation to the SIP are published and transparent, providing clarity for all staff.

The school determined three goals as the focus for the SIP: improving student achievement in reading from reception to year 3, improving student achievement in reading from years 4 to 7, and improving student achievement in maths from reception to year 7.

Staff indicated that monitoring of the SIP is regularly undertaken within PLTs, which are structured and supported with clear agendas, providing transparency and continuity in the tracking and monitoring of the SIP throughout the year.

Staff provided comprehensive evidence of engagement, understanding and application of SIP priorities and reported that regular communication in relation to the progress of the SIP is provided to all staff.

Peer observations related to SIP priorities were undertaken across the site and staff noted that this had provided an additional layer of accountability and supported the embedding of SIP priorities across the site.

Some staff, when reflecting on SIP goals, indicated that all students below the Standard of Education Achievement (SEA) in reading may benefit from the development of personal learning plans with specific goals to be monitored at five weekly intervals. Staff also noted that planned opportunities to share progress with students would strengthen their capacity to attain the identified goals.

During the staff meeting it was suggested that developing and displaying student learning goals that are aligned to the SIP was an area for consideration. Staff also identified the need to sustain the current work in oral language and vocabulary with an expectation that this would subsequently be reflected in students' writing.

Reflections from staff also referenced the need to improve, and subsequently embed, quality discussions with students in relation to their learning.

Direction 1 Strengthen opportunities for students to become integral partners in SIP processes through regular, planned opportunities to track and monitor their personal learning goals that are aligned to the SIP.

EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND STUDENT LEARNING

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

The school provided the panel with comprehensive evidence of processes used to assess learning across a range of levels. The special education team has developed comprehensive and rigorous protocols to track and monitor student progress that are aligned to Inclusive Education Support Program (IESP) funding.

PLTs are structured via common year levels which are strongly supported by leadership and focused on data analysis across a range of assessments. PLTs work with leaders of learning to analyse data and develop strategies to improve curriculum planning and instruction.

Staff identified a strong commitment to engaging in professional learning and building their personal and collective capacity to confidently differentiate curriculum planning and instruction. Only 13% of students interviewed during the review indicated that their learning was challenging. The school is well positioned to explore and design learning that intentionally provides differentiation for students at or above the SEA.

Engagement with the Learning Design, Assessment and Moderation (LDAM) strategy will support the school to develop and embed consistent processes in designing learning to ensure all students are regularly challenged in their learning.

Parents reported to the panel that they had noticed inconsistencies between conversations with staff relating to their child's progress during the semester and grade allocations at the end of a semester. The school is well positioned to develop a cohesive and strategic whole-school approach in the moderation of learning tasks and this will augment coherence and congruence in grade allocations across each area of learning and within each year level.

At the staff meeting held during the review, the panel was provided with extensive evidence of summative and formative assessments used to inform planning in reading and numeracy. An audit of current literacy and numeracy assessments to identify consistency within and across year levels would be expedient. Consideration could also be given to the implementation of an assessment tool to track and monitor student reading accuracy, fluency and comprehension for students who have achieved beyond level 30. The school is well positioned to develop whole-school literacy and numeracy agreements referenced against research-based best practice.

Direction 2 Strengthen differentiated curriculum planning and instruction through effective learning design, and the collaborative development and implementation of whole-school literacy and numeracy agreements.

EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND STUDENT LEARNING

To what extent do teachers ensure that students have authentic influence in their learning?

Some staff provided extensive evidence of students collaboratively planning and making decisions in inquiry based learning. Some students reported that during inquiry based learning they work in groups to determine what they will work on and how they will design and plan the learning. It is apparent that inquiry based learning has provided an opportunity for some students to authentically influence their learning.

The school has provided extensive opportunities for students in the older years to be involved in and undertake ownership of the kitchen garden and coffee programs. This has strongly empowered students in developing entrepreneurial acumen. Junior primary staff reported that they are guided via student wonderings and interests, which are then incorporated and aligned against the relevant curriculum areas.

Many students provided to the panel effort based responses when they were stuck in their learning and were unable to provide strategies for improvement when identifying what they needed to do to improve. Students reported that they had limited opportunities to receive feedback about themselves as learners from their peers.

Early years' teachers reported that students had provided explicit feedback in the design of learning tasks as an integral component of play based learning. Some students reported that they appreciated teachers sharing their learning data with them. During the review, only 6% of staff indicated that the feedback given to students to help them know how to improve was achieved to a high degree.

Several staff indicated that developing whole-school processes in feedback for learning, from the perspective of the student, is an area for further development. The school is well placed to develop a consistent whole-school approach to feedback and to explore the co-design of feedback for learning. Co-designing could involve students giving and sharing feedback with others, including adults and also provide opportunities for students to see themselves as powerful partners in their learning.

Direction 3 Develop a whole-school approach in the co-design of feedback for learning, thereby enabling all students to have authentic influence in learning.

Outcomes of the External School Review 2019

The panel noted the overwhelming support and deep respect from the governing council, parents, staff and students for the principal in respect to work undertaken in the strategic and comprehensive improvement agenda that has been undertaken at the school. The panel observed clear evidence of a highly collaborative and cohesive leadership team committed to ongoing improvement across the site.

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

- Direction 1** Strengthen opportunities for students to become integral partners in SIP processes through regular, planned opportunities to track and monitor their personal learning goals that are aligned to the SIP.
- Direction 2** Strengthen differentiated curriculum planning and instruction through effective learning design, and the collaborative development and implementation of whole-school literacy and numeracy agreements.
- Direction 3** Develop a whole-school approach in the co-design of feedback for learning, thereby enabling all students to have authentic influence in learning.

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



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REVIEW, IMPROVEMENT AND
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PARTNERSHIPS, SCHOOLS AND
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Julie Brown
PRINCIPAL
ELIZABETH GROVE 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, 37% of year 1 and 40% of year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. These results represent a decline for years 1 and 2 from the historic baseline average.

In 2019, the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 54% of year 3 students, 58% of year 5 students and 65% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For year 3 this result represents a decline, and for years 5 and 7 represents little or no change 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, 21% of year 3, 11% of year 5 and 9% 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, 43%, or 3 out of 7 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5, and 25%, or 1 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 63% of year 3 students, 53% of year 5 students and 46% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For years 3 and 5 this result represents an improvement, and for year 7 represents a decline from the historic baseline average.

Between 2017 and 2019, the trend for year 3 has been upwards, from 48% to 63%.

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

In 2019, 8% of year 3, 5% of year 5 and 3% of year 7 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN numeracy 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 numeracy, 67%, or 2 out of 3 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5, and 0%, or 0 out of 3 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7.