

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

EXTERNAL SCHOOL REVIEW
REPORT FOR ELIZABETH GROVE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Conducted in June 2016



**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 framework underpinning the External School Review identifies the key levers for school improvement and has been shaped and informed by research.

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

This Report of the External School Review 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.

The support and cooperation provided by the staff and school community is acknowledged. 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 External School Review was conducted by Ann O'Callaghan, Review Officer, Review, Improvement and Accountability Directorate and Di Jamieson, Review Principal.

Policy compliance

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

The Principal of Elizabeth Grove Primary School 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:

Part 6 Site Procedures: Item 1 Safety Management System

Matters requiring attention and follow-up relate to requirements for *Hazardous Chemicals*. The Principal has indicated that annual review and updating processes are currently being established as a follow-up task from the Business Manager. A review of current practices in relation to updating the Hazardous Chemical Register and the Safety Data Sheets has been carried out, and the school is in the final stage of development.

When the school's actions achieve compliancy with DECD policy and procedures, the Principal must resubmit the Policy Compliance Checklist to the Education Director.

Implementation of the *DECD Student Attendance Policy* was checked specifically against documented evidence. The school was found to be compliant with this policy. The school attendance rate for 2015 was 89.2%, which is below the DECD target of 93%.

School context

Elizabeth Grove Primary School is part of the Elizabeth Grove Community Campus, which includes the Elizabeth Grove Children's Centre and the Kids 'n' You Family Services.

The school has an ICSEA score of 901 and is classified as Category 1 on the DECD Index of Educational Disadvantage. There are seventy percent of families eligible for School Card assistance. Eighty-two percent of students live within 2 kilometres of the school.

In 2016, there are 260 students in the school. The school population includes 10% Aboriginal students, 11% Students with Disabilities, and 36% of students with English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EALD). Three percent of students are under the Guardianship of the Minister. Overall, there are 70 students at the school with Individual Learning Plans. In total, there are 110 (42%) students identified in the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD) who require an educational adjustment to assist them in participating on the same basis as other students.

Over the last three-year period, enrolment numbers have steadily increased with the rate of mobility stabilising. The annual 'transfer out' rate has decreased from 25% (60 students) in 2014 to 8% in 2016. The 'transfer in' rate has reversed over the same period, from 8% in 2014 to 25% in 2016.

The school Leadership Team consists of a Principal in the fourth year of his first tenure, a Senior Leader Student Wellbeing and Special Education appointed in 2013, and a Senior Leader Early Years who was appointed in 2016 after two years acting in the position. A Leader of Learning has been appointed 0.5FTE for 2014-2017 to coach and support teachers and build consistent practices from Reception to Year 7.

Since 2013, there has been significant change at the school. The features highly valued by the students, parents and staff include the Positive Education program, the new Kitchen and Garden program, and the Kaurna Garden and new Nature Playground. These initiatives are delivered as part of the curriculum. The school is also progressively refurbishing all classrooms to provide inspiring learning environments.

Elizabeth Grove Primary School is an active member of the Elizabeth local Partnership. The school's Leader of Learning also works 0.5FTE at Elizabeth Vale Primary School, and co-ordinates the professional learning Mathematics Action Team across Elizabeth Grove, Elizabeth Vale and Elizabeth South Primary Schools.

School Performance Overview

The External School Review process includes an analysis of school performance as measured against the DECD Standard of Educational Achievement (SEA).

Reading

In the early years, reading progress is monitored against Running Records. In 2015, 28% (9 of 32) of Year 1 and 52% (14 of 27) of Year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement under the DECD Standard of Educational Achievement (SEA). This result represents a decline at Year 1 from the historic baseline period. There is also a downward trend at Year 1 between years 2013 and 2015, from 59% to 37% to 28% respectively. The results at Year 2 show an improvement from the historic baseline period and no trend over the past three years.

In 2015, the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 72% (23 of 32) of Year 3 students, 54% (14 of 26) of Year 5 students and 65% (15 of 23) of Year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement under the DECD SEA. For Years 3, 5 and 7, this result represents at least a 10% improvement at each year level from the historic baseline average.

For 2015, in Years 3, 5 and 7, the school is achieving within the results of similar students across DECD schools.

In 2015, 25% (8 of 32) of Year 3, 12% (3 of 26) of Year 5 and 13% (3 of 23) of Year 7 students achieved in the top two NAPLAN Reading bands. For Year 3, this result represents an improvement from the historic baseline average.

For those students who achieved in the top two NAPLAN proficiency bands in reading, 40%, or 2 of 5 students from Year 3, remain in the upper bands at Year 5 in 2015, and 50%, or 2 of 4 students from Year 3, remain in the upper bands at Year 7 in 2015. These results represent little change from the historic baseline average.

Numeracy

In 2015, the numeracy results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 63% (20 of 32) of Year 3 students, 39% (10 of 26) of Year 5 students, and 61% (14 of 23) of Year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement under the DECD SEA. For Years 3 and 7, this result represents an improvement from the historic baseline average. At Year 5, the result represents a decline from the historic baseline period.

For 2015 Year 3 and 7, the school is achieving within the results of similar students across DECD schools. At Year 5, the school is achieving below the results of similar students across DECD schools.

In 2015, 13% (4 of 32) of Year 3, 0% (0 of 26) of Year 5, and 4% (1 of 23) of Year 7 students achieved in the top two NAPLAN Numeracy bands. For Year 3, this result represents little change from the historic baseline average.

For those students who achieved in the top two NAPLAN proficiency bands in numeracy, no students from Year 3 in 2013 remain in the upper bands at Year 5 in 2015, and one student from Year 3 in 2011 remains in the upper bands at Year 7 in 2015. These results represent a decline from the historic baseline average at Year 5 and little or no change at Year 7.

Lines of Inquiry

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

Student Learning: How well does the school improve student achievement, growth, challenge, engagement and equity?

Effective Teaching How effectively are teachers supporting students in their learning?

How well does the school improve student achievement, growth, challenge, engagement and equity?

It was evident to the Review Panel that the Principal and other members of the Leadership Team are working collaboratively with staff to ensure that all students and priority groups of students at Elizabeth Grove Primary School are supported to improve their learning and wellbeing. The shared goal is to do what needs to be done to improve learning for each child, achieving at least one year's growth every year. Staff said they were well-supported in this endeavour, by each other and by their leaders. A positive and focused culture of learning was found to be a hallmark of the school for students and staff.

Guiding principles for learning improvement and quality performance express the school's ground rules: 'strong partnerships are built and achieved through successful collaboration and teamwork'; 'every student and every staff member is a valued learner'; and 'we belong to a professional learning community'. These principles were evident in the school's 2014-2018 strategic planning, and exemplified in the annual action plans, the school's organisational systems and structures, and in daily practices.

These thoughtful and evidence-based plans and agreements guide and support the improvement work at the school. Self-review is embedded throughout the year and in specific cycles. Additional regular planning supports data analysis and tracking of student growth, for individuals, groups and cohorts.

The Review Panel found strong indication that the strategic approach is working. In 2015, the school performance results in reading and numeracy have improved in six out of the eight standards of educational achievement. Most notable is the improvement in four out of five SEA Reading measures.

On the other hand, while the declining trends of cohorts at Year 1 reading and Year 5 numeracy show very specific areas for improvement, the pressing challenge for the whole school is to sustain the numbers of students demonstrating growth and improvement at and above the SEA, and in higher bands.

The Review Panel's analysis highlights three areas to ensure continuous improvement:

- Sustain the high rate of SEA achievement demonstrated by Reception students in 2015: the ongoing tracking and monitoring of each child's learning in Reception, Years 1 and 2 is essential to consolidate the development of literacy and numeracy foundations (for example, indicators on a continuum).
- Sustain the rate of learning of students achieving in the higher bands of Reading in Year 3 in 2015 (Year 4 2016): the school's 'putting faces on the data' strategy will assist teachers to not only track these students from one year to the next, but also support others to demonstrate higher levels of achievement at or beyond the expected twelve-month growth (for example, Progressive Achievement Tests).
- Increase the results of all primary students towards, at, or above the top of the range achieved by comparable groups of students in other DECD schools (for example, high expectations and outwards-facing).

The school is positioned to meet ongoing objectives such as these because the improvement narrative of this school is simple and clear: 'know your students' and 'you have to know them back to front, not just on the surface level'. Teachers appreciated working with clear expectations and they felt well-supported.

The school already has specific year level 'success targets' in the site action plans for numeracy and literacy. There is a range of accessible data available to support teachers in learning design and assessment in these areas of the curriculum. The Review Panel also heard from the staff that frequent and purposeful use of class data is helping them develop their data literacy skills to track, monitor, understand and respond to the needs of each student.

Only data that the teachers have found to be useful in this regard is now collected, analysed and used.

Working collaboratively to 'know' the students is supported by the congruent efforts of the Principal, Senior Leaders, the Special Education/Aboriginal Education teacher, and specialist non-teaching staff. One or more of these staff members periodically meet together with class teachers (that is, once a term) using the school's Student Review Team processes. The Review Panel heard that the teachers, and sometimes the SSOs, bring formative assessment information and evidence of class work samples that demonstrate growth against success criteria. With the Student Review Team leading, a teacher discusses student learning and learning progress made from within the classroom, celebrates the successes and works out the next steps to improve student learning outcomes.

This transparent support strategy is developing shared responsibility, improvement and mutual accountability. Respectful and non-judgemental feedback is appreciated as common practice.

At a whole-school level, the Individual Student Reports provided by DECD were being used by the Principal to monitor and target individual student progress over time. The intention of 'student profiling' is to know how well each child (or group) is on track to achieve expected growth in their learning. Results are colour-coded to ensure the targets stand out. Students from priority groups (Students with Disabilities; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students; and students with English as an Additional Language and Dialect) are specifically highlighted so their growth can be readily identified and intervention evaluated.

There is no doubt that purposeful analysis and profiling is influencing the quality of differentiation, intervention and improvement for students and for staff. Evidence about learning is part of professional conversations that openly support teacher performance and development. Teachers and non-teaching staff appreciate the fact that the school is responsive to their needs too, by providing negotiated professional support that is directed towards helping them improve their students' learning. Teachers felt comfortable with this differentiated model, saying that their coaches and colleagues were respectful and non-judgemental: "it is so different here, you can go to anyone". Supporting all teachers in this way is also assisting the school to minimise variance between classes and work towards realising the expectation of at least one year's growth, every year, for every student.

Students said they felt their teachers knew them well: "they spend time talking to us and they talk to our parents"; "they test us to know our level"; and "they ask questions". The students also felt the teachers helped them best in their learning: "by making things fun"; "by starting a lesson with a goal"; "by helping us work in special groups"; and "by testing us to teach us new things". All students felt the learning code was important: "you see it and it reminds you what to do"; "when you follow it, you learn better and more". They said that new students see others using the learning code and they do too, and they were pleased that the Temporary Relief Teachers (TRTs) used the learning code language in class and in the yard.

The school is working well to 'cover all bases', to know who each child is, what their wellbeing for learning needs are, and what will best engage them and enable them to aspire and achieve over time at school.

To this end, the Review Panel found that to raise learning achievement for all students, the school is ready to build on the individual learning plan model being used for many students in the priority groups. When every student has a set of learning goals that are inclusive of their needs, and student interests are developed against the Australian Curriculum in consultation with the teachers and shared with parents (for example, through three-way interviews), all students will be supported to achieve their own challenges.

Older students, who have especially embraced the Positive Education program in the last few years, were articulate about what a challenge meant for them. They were able to draw on empowering growth-mindset attitudes to explain the impact that facing a challenge had on their learning: "it means you need to try a clearway in whatever you are doing to pass the challenge"; "it means doing some things that are hard or doing some things that are new"; "something challenging is when you can't solve a question, but you want to understand it"; "to face a challenge is to be hard-working"; "a challenge is sometimes hard for you to face, but you might learn from your mistakes"; and "getting pushed to your limits".

Positive Education is having a significant impact on student perceptions of themselves and their learning: "it helps us to keep going"; "helps me to stay calm"; and "I don't just give up". The Review Panel heard that considerable work has been done to embed 'Pos Ed' and the 'Learning Code' as part of the learning culture. The philosophies, strategies and techniques are aligned as a specialist program and in all aspects of life at the school. Both initiatives help students to not only learn, but to know how to be a learner.

The Review Panel found that the Elizabeth Grove Primary School community ought to now follow-through with the current improvement agenda and, at the same time, strengthen the focus on knowing where each child needs to be next ('I can' statements), what strategies each child needs to use to get there ('I will' statements), and ensure each child will get feedback to check milestones and celebrate progress.

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 their learning with others.


OUTCOMES OF EXTERNAL SCHOOL REVIEW 2016

Elizabeth Grove Primary School has a long-term plan to improve teaching, learning and wellbeing by delivering an integrated, student-centred and personal skills-based program. Multiple measures and student achievement data are used to inform decisions and actions. Frameworks and systems serve as the touchstones for consistency, continuity and self-review. A culture of improvement is characterised by high expectations for all students to aspire and do well at school.

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

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 their learning with others.
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.

Based on the school's current performance Elizabeth Grove Primary School will be externally reviewed again in 2020.



Tony Lunniss
DIRECTOR
REVIEW, IMPROVEMENT AND
ACCOUNTABILITY



Jayne Johnston
CHIEF EDUCATION OFFICER

The school will provide an implementation plan to the Education Director and community within three months of receipt of this report. Progress towards implementing the plan will be reported in the school's Annual Report.



Dan Jarrad
PRINCIPAL
ELIZABETH GROVE PRIMARY
SCHOOL



Governing Council Chairperson

