

Department for Education External School Review

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

Report for Eden Hills Primary School

Conducted in October 2021



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 John McCade, 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
- Discussions with:
 - Governing Council representatives
 - Leaders
 - Parent groups
 - School Services Officers (SSOs)
 - Student representatives
 - Teachers.

School context

Eden Hills Primary School caters for students from reception to year 7. It is situated 15kms from the Adelaide CBD. The enrolment in 2021, as at the February census, is 251. Enrolment at the time of the previous review was 281. The local partnership is Mitcham Hills.

The school has a 2020 ICSEA score of 1111 and is classified as Category 7 on the Department for Education Index of Educational Disadvantage.

The school population includes less than 5% Aboriginal students, 10% students with disabilities, less than 5% students with English as an additional language or dialect (EALD) background, less than 5% children/young people in care and 16% of students eligible for School Card assistance.

The school leadership team consists of a Principal in their 1st year of tenure and a Deputy Principal also in their first year of tenure. Both the Principal and Deputy Principal fulfilled the role in an acting capacity in 2020.

There are 21 Teachers including 1 in the early years of their career and 6 Step 9 Teachers.

The previous ESR or OTE directions were:

- Direction 1** **Develop and embed authentic student influence on learning, strengthened by embedding learning intentions, goal setting and student feedback, as part of regular reviews at the beginning and end of units of work.**
- Direction 2** **Foster a shared culture of learning in the school through a positive and focused approach to improvement and change that is determined, understood and enacted by staff and community.**

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

Increase the authentic student influence on inquiry learning is the third goal in the school's improvement plan (SIP). Attention to embedding learning intentions, goal setting and student feedback is evident in classroom practice. Developing students as powerful learners is strategically planned for within the school and further supported through the partnership's joint focus. There has been particular emphasis on developing a thinking culture, initially facilitated through targeted professional learning. This direction is further explored in line of inquiry 3.

An improved collaborative culture of learning is identified by all stakeholders. There is shared understanding by staff, students and parents of the improvement agenda, and actions and strategies are in place to achieve the SIP goals and challenges of practice. A cycle of whole-school staff meetings, professional learning communities (PLCs) and team meetings ensure the SIP is a living document that leads the work of staff. Setting clear expectations and establishing timely communication structures has built a culture of collective ownership for improvement.

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?

SIP priorities have been determined from a deep analysis of data, research of best practice, some alignment with partnership foci and in response to the previous External School Review directions. Over time the challenges of practice, actions and success criteria have been refined to align more closely with student achievement, curriculum requirements and knowledge of highly effective teaching practice.

There has been clear attention to building a shared understanding of the SIP. Governing council and executive members of the student representative council (SRC) have clarity of the 3 goals. SRC are designing their own SIP and working towards all students having a better understanding of the components within it. Staff are committed to the SIP agenda and through PLCs, teachers review their actions against the SIP goals regularly. Professional learning, performance development processes and PLCs all link with the 3 school priorities. Each PLC has a teacher lead. The PLC leads keep their members focused on the improvement agenda and attend governing council to provide information about PLC work within SIP expectations.

Rotations in staff meetings result in PLCs being followed by team meetings the next week. This ensures that information is distributed from PLCs to teaching teams to focus their work. Teams provide feedback to PLCs for ideas of further refinement or consideration. This year, PLCs have met with another school's PLCs from within the partnership. This provides opportunity for broader collaborative discussion, building collective expertise and further ideas for improvement. Planning more joint PLCs and building the leadership capacity of the PLC leads is identified by leaders as ongoing work for the school. As teaching teams can be small it would be beneficial for the school to also explore other opportunities for teachers to develop critical dialogue with peers that continuously challenge and refine practice.

The school has regular self-review processes that measure the impact of the improvement agenda on student outcomes. These check-ins indicate that the school has been unable to evaluate the success in some instances as there has been insufficient data to show evidence of student progress. The next step for the school will be to explore further assessment tools that can measure progress at regular points throughout the year. This will enable a timelier adjustment to practice that ensures best outcomes for all students.

Direction 1 Establish evidence-based measures that monitor the impact of improvement strategies against student progress regularly throughout the year to further refine actions.

Effective teaching and student learning

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

Greater confidence in analysing data for intentional teaching is described by teachers. Agreed data tools are outlined in the assessment schedule and an online platform ensures all staff have central access to student information. Annual and biannual assessments inform the school's improvement agenda and classroom practice, predominantly in literacy. Teachers and leaders recognise the necessity for more regular assessment of student achievement. Establishing a suite of tools that continuously inform teachers about student progress across learning areas is pending work for the school.

Data discussions about student progress occur formally with leaders and in team meetings to plan forward for students. Teachers report that they often use data to group students for differentiated learning. This provides teachers with the opportunity to work closely with like ability groups to deepen understanding. Summative data that analyses teaching points for individual students, such as the school wide implementation of an effective writing assessment tool, provides teachers with the explicit next steps for students. Staff identify that this has greatly improved the teaching of writing.

Formative assessment examples identified by teachers include conversations, observations, reflection after learning and questioning. Opportunities for peer and self-assessment also occur. Feedback to students about their learning is mostly verbal. Both formative assessment and feedback practices are often described after learning. More formative assessment that provides 'just in time' feedback during the learning, for students to stretch their thinking and outcomes, would be beneficial. Students report that their learning is generally easy with some challenge. Stretch and challenge in daily learning is acknowledged by teachers, parents, and students as an area of growth that the school could further focus on.

Students find it difficult to articulate how they are going in their learning, how they can improve or what their next steps are. They believe they are doing well because the teacher tells them, they see their grades, or they get harder work. Rubrics are used in many classrooms for some of the learning and these provide students with more clarity on how to achieve higher outcomes. Teachers sharing assessments regularly with students will enable them to understand what they know and need to know. This ongoing knowledge about student achievement will enable teachers to plan more intentionally for stretch and challenge and empower students to become more articulate about their learning.

Direction 2 Strengthen teacher capacity for more intentional and targeted teaching by implementing and analysing agreed assessment tools that continuously track and monitor student progress.

Effective teaching and student learning

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

Genuine influence is noticeable through the student SIP, a variety of leadership roles undertaken by 'graduate' students, and student initiatives implemented in the school grounds. Powerful learner attributes outline the school's values and are visible in all classrooms. Critical thinking, one of the attributes, features in both the school and student SIP. SRC are passionate about ensuring students understand terminology and are designing posters for display that define key concepts. They monitor actions from the student SIP intently.

Staff recognise that for students to be active participants in collaborative planning and decision making they require specific skills to do so. There is a well-established culture of students articulating their thinking. Students are encouraged to be proactive and tell teachers when they don't understand their learning, or they want more time to practice. Teachers seek feedback from students and act upon it. Some teachers provide students with opportunities to co-construct rubrics or assess their learning in different ways.

Learning intentions and success criteria that inform students about what they are learning and how to know if they are successful, feature in all classrooms. Learning intentions are more embedded than success criteria and there is some difference in the language used. These strategies can be deepened by ensuring consistency in language across all classes and scaffolding success criteria to support every student to achieve higher outcomes. When used effectively in classrooms, students can explain how these strategies support them to be independent learners. Reflection at the end of learning is enhanced when teachers and students link back to the learning intentions and success criteria.

Individual goal setting is evident in most classes across the school with variability in how goals come about and how they are monitored. Most goals are skill or behaviour based. Some classes use the SMART acronym for setting specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely goals. For students to become independent learners, empowered to set their own goals which continuously stretch their learning, they need to have a clear understanding of their achievement and the progression of learning within the curriculum, to know their next steps. Coherence between students reflecting on their learning, knowing their achievement and formative assessment and feedback processes, will enable students to clearly articulate their learning and self-direct their own improvement.

Direction 3 Share assessments and the progression of learning with students for them to have clear information that enables them to set, monitor and review explicit learning goals.

Outcomes of the External School Review 2021

Eden Hills Primary School has a welcoming atmosphere and staff, students and parents are proud of their school and its community feel. Building strong relationships between staff and students is identified as paramount to ensuring student success. Students feel heard by adults in their learning and are particularly proud of the influence they have on the school environment. Staff show high levels of professionalism. They value working collaboratively and express a genuine commitment to the improvement agenda and to improve outcomes for all students. Effective systems are in place to facilitate a cohesive approach to school improvement, and these continue to evolve. The learning culture that has been established provides a strong platform for future improvement.

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

- Direction 1** **Establish evidence-based measures that monitor the impact of improvement strategies against student progress regularly throughout the year to further refine actions.**
- Direction 2** **Strengthen teacher capacity for more intentional and targeted teaching by implementing and analysing agreed assessment tools that continuously track and monitor student progress.**
- Direction 3** **Share assessments and the progression of learning with students for them to have clear information that enables them to set, monitor and review explicit learning goals.**

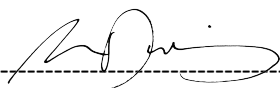
Based on the school's current performance, Eden Hills Primary School will be externally reviewed again in 2024.



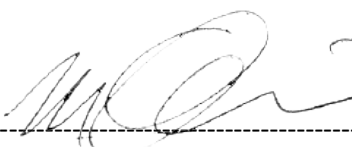
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Governing Council Chairperson

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 2020 82% of year 1 and 85% of year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. This result represents little or no change for year 1, and an improvement for year 2 from the historic baseline average.

Between 2018 and 2020 the trend for year 1 and 2 has been upwards from 69% to 82% and 59% to 85% respectively.

In 2021 the reading results as measured by NAPLAN indicate that 93% of year 3 students, 93% of year 5 students and 86% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For years 3 and 5 this result represents an improvement from the historic baseline average. For year 7 this result represents little or no change from the historic baseline average.

For 2021 year 3, 5 and 7 NAPLAN reading the school is achieving within the results of similar students across government schools.

In 2021 52% of year 3, 47% of year 5 and 31% of year 7 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN reading bands. For year 3 this result represents an improvement from the historic baseline average.

For those students in 2021 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in reading 59% or 10 out of 17 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5 and 43% or 6 out of 14 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7.

Numeracy

In 2021 the numeracy results as measured by NAPLAN indicate that 93% of year 3 students, 93% of year 5 students and 86% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For year 3, 5 and 7 this result represents an improvement from the historic baseline average.

Between 2018 and 2021 the trend for year 7 has been downwards from 96% to 86%.

For 2021 year 3, 5 and 7 NAPLAN numeracy the school is achieving within the results of similar groups of students across government schools.

In 2021 38% of year 3, 33% of year 5 and 36% 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 2021 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in numeracy 60% or 9 out of 15 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5 and 58% or 7 out of 12 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7.