

Department for Education

External School Review

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

Report for Kingston Community School

Conducted in May 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 ESR 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 Alison Lynch, Review Officer of the department's Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate and Warren Symonds, 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:
 - Governing Council representatives
 - Leaders
 - Parent groups
 - School Support Officers (SSOs)
 - Student groups
 - Teachers

School context

Kingston Community School caters for children from Reception to year 12. It is situated 309kms from the Adelaide CBD. The enrolment in 2019 is 295 students. The enrolment at the time of the previous review was 336. Enrolment has declined over the last 5 years.

The school has an ICSEA score of 969, and is classified as Category 3 on the Department for Education Index of Educational Disadvantage.

The school population includes 3% Aboriginal students, 3% students with a verified disability, 3 students in care and 19% families eligible for School Card assistance.

The school leadership team consists of a principal in the third year of her tenure, 2 senior leaders, a deputy principal, an assistant principal and 2 coordinators.

The previous ESR or OTE directions were:

- Direction 1** Address the downward trend in the proportion of students meeting the Department for Education Standard of Educational Achievement (SEA) by reviewing intervention strategies, and act to address identified learning needs as early as possible in children's schooling.
- Direction 2** Ensure that the tasks and activities provided to students add value to their learning by working collaboratively to develop deep pedagogical and content understanding of the Australian Curriculum (AC).
- Direction 3** Refine formative assessment processes and provide quality feedback, explicit instruction and exemplars to students on how to improve.
- Direction 4** Work with the Governing Council and Student Representative Council to provide parents with learning and curriculum information so that they may confidently make a positive contribution to their children's learning.

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

Clear evidence was provided to the review panel of the work undertaken in response to the 2015 ESR directions.

After reviewing the strategies in place to address students' learning needs, a lack of numeracy intervention strategies was identified. As a result, QuickSmart has been introduced to support small groups of students, along with MiniLit to improve literacy outcomes. To date, little improvement in the number of students achieving SEA has resulted, with a saw tooth pattern evident across year levels, dependent on the cohort of students. SACE results, although small in number, continue to be of a high standard.

Collaborative moderation, both within the school and across the partnership, has fostered increased teacher discussions, a greater willingness to share practice and a deeper understanding of the Australian Curriculum. Literacy, numeracy and quality teaching agreements have been developed collaboratively by staff.

The benefit of whole-school in-depth professional development in formative assessment, using the 2-year Assessment for Learning model, is evident in teachers' understanding and use of a range of formative assessments in some classes. The next step is to use the information provided from feedback consistently across the school to inform next steps in teaching and to provide quality feedback to students about how to improve.

Parents are appreciative of improved communication channels between the school and home. A school Facebook page, a parent portal on Sentral and easy access to the school's newsletter (email, website and Facebook) have been introduced to provide avenues for contact and sharing curriculum information. Parents commented positively about the use of class Dojo, and an early years' class Facebook page, to keep them up to date with their child's learning, however this is not widespread at this stage. Curriculum overviews have been completed and will be shared with families soon. Further work is required in supporting parents to engage in the learning partnership between families, students and the school.

Lines of inquiry

EFFECTIVE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

How effectively does the school use improvement planning processes to raise student achievement?

The panel commends the principal's approach to ensuring extensive opportunities were provided for teachers to engage with the process of developing the School Improvement Plan (SIP). A pupil free day and staff meetings were dedicated to the collaborative review of the previous SIP, and to the review and analysis of relevant data sets to determine goals, targets and challenges of practice. It is evident that a consultative process was used to ensure collective ownership of the improvement agenda, with a common understanding and language related to the SIP evident across the school. External and internal expertise has been accessed to build teachers' understanding of the process and their role in its implementation. The Governing Council has been informed throughout the development of the SIP and its implementation to date.

The challenges of practice were identified to inform the school's work towards improving students' reading comprehension, numeracy and writing skills across all classes and not restricted to the year levels identified in the targets. Teachers indicated they were clearer than in previous years as to how the actions and strategies outlined in the SIP align with their daily work. Staff are clear in their understanding of SIP goals and are committed to supporting their implementation.

Teachers understand the need to incorporate the literacy and numeracy goals into their teaching, irrespective of their year level or subject focus. Increased collaboration amongst staff and understanding of different learning areas and year levels has resulted from the SIP planning process. Professional development processes have focussed on teachers aligning their Professional Development Plans (PDPs) to the SIP.

The school is well placed to monitor progress towards improvement goals by reviewing the impact of actions and strategies on student learning as they establish which evidence will guide this self-evaluation. The expectation that each teacher is an active member of the literacy or numeracy group supports this.

Direction 1 Ensure collaborative literacy and numeracy forums maintain the focus on tracking and reviewing the implementation of SIP goals and actions against measured targets, irrespective of year level or subject focus, to ensure improved practice is embedded and consistent throughout the school.

Effective teaching and student learning

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

Staff assess students' learning and collect a range of data. Across the school moderation is a strength and has been embraced by teachers as part of the Learning Design, Assessment and Moderation (LDAM) strategy.

The deep analysis of student data used strategically to inform SIP priorities needs to be replicated in the analysis of curriculum, pedagogical and assessment practices to ensure effective learning design. Most teachers are yet to use the data, whether formative or summative, to identify students' strengths and miscues and plan accordingly, apart from grouping students.

Most teachers are confident in the use of a range of formative assessment practices as a result of a whole-school professional development focus in 2017-2018. There is evidence in many classrooms of teachers using these practices to gauge students' understanding, and in some cases, to modify the teaching.

Teachers clearly appreciate the importance of differentiating the curriculum to meet the needs of individual students, as evidenced through interviews and a written survey completed during the review. However, little evidence of differentiation was seen in classrooms or from student responses, with the same task often set for all students. There was also a heavy reliance on worksheets that provided limited opportunities for individual stretch. Ongoing assessment of learning, and feedback from and to students, should inform teachers' differentiated planning and teaching, supporting improvement in students' learning through the provision of multiple entry and exit points and open-ended tasks.

Teachers reported that they predominantly provide oral feedback to students, whereas written feedback that provides clear next steps to improvement was limited. Most students were unable to articulate any feedback that was provided to them and did not know what constitutes an A to E grade or how they can improve. The use of rubrics and exemplars evident in some classes is a means to address this uncertainty and provide students with clear steps to improve their learning.

Direction 2 Establish a school-wide agreement of, and commitment to, effective differentiation in practice and further develop structures and processes to ensure it is informed by assessment data and student feedback.

Effective teaching and student learning

How effectively are teachers using evidence-based pedagogical practices that engage and challenge all learners?

Staff are committed to improving their practice and the learning outcomes of students. A range of professional learning, including formative assessment and Brightpath writing training, has been undertaken by all staff and should encourage greater sharing and consistency of practice, along with opportunities to further challenge all learners.

A Quality Teaching Agreement was developed several years ago and outlines clear expectations for all teachers to provide challenge and high expectations, feedback to and from students, peer observations and feedback, opportunities for students to influence their learning and differentiation of learning. A review of this agreement to ensure a current agreed approach and commitment by all staff to quality pedagogical practices would be helpful.

Recently introduced, play pedagogies have enabled early years students to make some decisions about their learning. New nature-play and STEM spaces will provide opportunities for students to engage in collaborative learning across the school.

Students identified little opportunity to influence their own learning. Low level influence included 'choosing a topic, book or game and how to present our work'. In some classes, effective practices enable students to independently monitor and evaluate their progress through the use of success criteria, rubrics and individual goal setting.

The language and value of learning intentions, success criteria, and student goal setting, was evident in teacher conversations and written survey responses but not in student understandings and usage. The school is well placed to maximise student engagement in learning through the consistent implementation of teaching strategies that enable students to better understand the purpose of their learning and the criteria for success. A focus on this, through initially targeting reading comprehension, writing and/or numeracy to link with the SIP, could be considered.

Student goal setting has been a focus within the school and is being used in several classes but with varying levels of importance and impact. The use of SMARTAR goal setting processes will ensure more focussed and relevant goals, perhaps initially linked to the SIP. Teacher support, follow up and increased visibility will ensure students take responsibility for setting, and working to achieve, personal learning goals. Acknowledging student effort and achievement in this process will further encourage active participation and responsibility.

Direction 3 Collaboratively develop and implement a consistent whole-school pedagogical approach and commitment to increasing students' influence in their learning by the setting of personal learning goals, sharing clear learning intentions and success criteria with students and providing opportunities for student collaborative learning.

Outcomes of the External School Review 2019

Major refurbishments across the school have provided high quality facilities and resources for all students at Kingston Community School. Although enrolments are decreasing, the school provides a wide range of subject offerings for SACE students and consistently achieves good results in the senior years. Increased collaboration and understanding of each other's daily work has resulted from the development of the school's improvement plan and whole-school professional learning, with little disconnect between the primary and secondary years teams. Parents are appreciative of the improved communication between home and school and the progress reports provided.

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

- Direction 1** Ensure collaborative literacy and numeracy forums maintain the focus on tracking and reviewing the implementation of SIP goals and actions against measured targets, irrespective of year level or subject focus, to ensure improved practice is embedded and consistent throughout the school.
- Direction 2** Establish a school-wide agreement of, and commitment to, effective differentiation in practice and further develop structures and processes to ensure it is informed by assessment data and student feedback.
- Direction 3** Collaboratively develop and implement a consistent whole-school pedagogical approach and commitment to increasing students' influence in their learning by the setting of personal learning goals, sharing clear learning intentions and success criteria with students and providing opportunities for student collaborative learning.

Based on the school's current performance, Kingston Community School will be externally reviewed again in 2022.



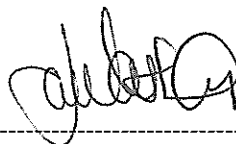
Tony Lunniss
DIRECTOR
REVIEW, IMPROVEMENT AND
ACCOUNTABILITY



Anne Millard
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
PARTNERSHIPS, SCHOOLS AND
PRECHOOLS



Toc Tocaciu
PRINCIPAL
KINGSTON COMMUNITY 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, 75% of year 1, and 78% of year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. This result represents an improvement for year 1 and little or no change for year 2 from the historic baseline average.

In 2018, the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 88% of year 3 students, 70% of year 5 students, 55% of year 7 students, and 76% of year 9 students demonstrated the expected achievement under the SEA. For years 3 and 9, this result represents an improvement, for year 5 little or no change, and a decline for year 7 from the historic baseline average.

For 2018, years 3, 5 and 9 NAPLAN reading, the school is achieving within and for year 7 lower than the results of similar students across government schools.

In 2018, 25% of year 3, 22% of year 5, 26% of year 7, and 8% of year 9 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 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in reading, 80%, or 4 out of 5 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5 in 2018, 86%, or 6 out of 7 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7, 22%, or 2 out of 9 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 9, and 33%, or 2 out of 6 students from year 7 remain in the upper bands at year 9 in 2018.

Numeracy

In 2018, the numeracy results as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 75% of year 3 students, 74% of year 5 students, 77% of year 7 students and 84% of year 9 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For years 3 and 9, this result represents an improvement, and for years 5 and 7 little or no change from the historic baseline average.

For 2018, years 3, 5 and 7 NAPLAN numeracy, the school is achieving within and for year 9 higher than the results of similar groups of students across government schools.

Between 2016 and 2018, the trend for year 9 has been upwards, from 62% in 2016, to 84% in 2018.

In 2018, 19% of year 3, 0% of year 5, 10% of year 7, and 24% of year 9 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN numeracy bands. For year 3, this result represents little or no change from the historic baseline average.

Between 2016 and 2018, the trend for year 3 higher bands achievement has been upwards from 0% in 2016, to 19% in 2018.

For those students who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in numeracy, 0 students from year 3 are in the upper bands at year 5 in 2018, 40%, or 2 out of 5 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7, 25%, or 1 out of 4 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 9, and 100%, or 3 out of 3 students from year 7 remain in the upper bands at year 9 in 2018.

SACE

In terms of SACE completion in 2018, 91% of students enrolled in February, and 100% of those enrolled in October, who had the potential to complete their SACE did go on to successfully achieve SACE. This result for October SACE completion represents an improvement from the historic baseline average

For compulsory SACE Stage 1 and 2 subjects in 2018, 92% of students successfully completed their Stage 1 Personal Learning Plan, 100% of students successfully completed their Stage 1 literacy units, 92% successfully completed their Stage 1 numeracy units, and 100% successfully completed their Stage 2 Research Project.

For attempted Stage 2 SACE subjects in 2018, 99% of grades achieved were at 'C-' level or higher, 32% of grades were at an 'A' level, and 39% of grades were at a 'B' level. This result represents an improvement, from the historic baseline averages for the 'C-' or higher and 'A' grades, and a decline for 'B' grades.

5% of students completed SACE using VET and there were no students enrolled in the Flexible Learning Options program in 2018.

In terms of 2018 tertiary entrance, 100%, or 19 out of 19 potential students achieved an ATAR or TAFE SA selection score. There were also 2 students who were successful at achieving a merit.