

Department for Education

External School Review

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

Report for Magill School R-7

Conducted in July 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, they all have been considered and contributed to the development and directions of this report.

This review was conducted by Helen Tunney, Review Officer of the department's Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate and Angela Falkenberg and Michael Washington, Review Principals.

Review Process

The following processes were used to gather evidence relating 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

Magill School R-7 caters for students from reception to year 7. It is situated 8kms from the Adelaide CBD. The enrolment in 2019 is 880 students. The enrolment at the time of the last review was 792.

The school has an ICSEA score of 1105 and is classified as Category 7 on the Department for Education Index of Educational Disadvantage. The local partnership is Morialta.

The school population includes 0.68% Aboriginal students, 5% students with a verified disability, 18% families eligible for School Card assistance, 28% students with English as an additional language or dialect (EALD) background, 55% students from Non-English speaking background, and 4 children in care.

The principal in the 2nd year of his tenure at the school. The school leadership team consists of a deputy principal, 2 assistant principals and a wellbeing coordinator. There are 45 FTE teachers including none in the early years of their career and 22 Step 9 teachers.

Previous ESR directions were:

- Direction 1** To engage and intellectually stretch students, teachers intentionally incorporate the General Capability of creative and critical thinking into their learning design and assessment, particularly in Years 6 and 7.
- Direction 2** Strengthen student influence on their learning and throughout the school and align the work of student voice forums more closely with the school priorities of engagement and intellectual stretch.
- Direction 3** To provide coherent, rigorous and engaging learning experiences for students, develop, document and embed whole-school agreements into practice, particularly in regard to the teaching of reading.

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

Year 6-7 teachers have participated in variety of program such as STEM 500, year 7-8 STEM project and STEMMIES. This participation has had some influence on the development of productive pedagogies. Although there are good pockets of practice in relation to the general capabilities, critical and creative thinking, is yet to be embedded across the school.

Student voice has developed from a traditional Student Representative Council (SRC) model to one that incorporates action teams. All teachers are actively engaged in using learning intentions and success criteria with students and the school working for more consistency of these practices.

The school has well documented agreements in place for the teaching of reading. The development of other agreements is prioritised in the school. Awareness of the value of gaining greater consistency of teaching practice is developing.

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?

In 2018, at the start of the tenure of the current principal, a review of the school was enacted. This meant the school was prepared for the new school improvement model process where, in the development of the current Site Improvement Plan (SIP), consultation with staff was extensive. A resourced team planning structure is now in place. This has been successful and is changing the culture of the school from individual, privatised teacher practice to one of greater sharing of practice. The outcomes so far from the collaborative planning team model (CPT) include the development of teaching and learning cycles, increased use of data to inform practice, and teacher awareness of the value of collaboration. Data literacy is developing in teachers at varying rates. Some teachers are highly and independently data literate, whereas others are only engaging with data for compliance reasons. There has been increased resourcing for coaching and mentoring through a change in leadership structure. Teachers value observations and feedback, and is facilitating the monitoring of the impact on student learning due to changes to pedagogy.

The school is well-placed now to deepen teacher understanding about the connection between learning and teaching. It is through intentional changes to teacher practice that student learning is enhanced.

Direction 1 Further improve student learning through the use of improved teacher practice, particularly in the area of using regular feedback from students, peers and leadership to make continuous adjustments to teaching in order to maximise each teacher's impact on student learning.

EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND STUDENT LEARNING

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

All teachers are valuing the recent initiative of collaborative planning teams. Work in like-year levels in these teams has resulted in a move towards the development of a common approach to teaching writing, strengthened use of moderation practices, deepening differentiation and increased teacher awareness of the value of, and need for, consistent practices. Parents value the developing common approaches that they see, and the workshops about content and new pedagogies that the school is providing.

However, there was variation in some areas of the school between what teachers told the panel they were doing and what the panel both observed and heard students talk about. Traditional learning models were evident. One-size fits all, and single entry point tasks were commonly observed in class walkthroughs. There was some evidence that teachers are regularly designing learning for stretch. Most teachers design learning from Content Descriptors rather than use backwards planning, from the Achievement Standards of the Australian Curriculum.

There has been recent significant effort to improve the quality of pedagogies and to improve the consistency of practice across the school. There is evidence that the transference of this new learning is occurring in varying ways between individuals and teams of teachers.

It is important for the school to ensure that its improvement work with teachers is both narrow and deep as well as differentiated, consistent, rigorous and of high-quality. Seeking regular feedback from every teacher about how they are experiencing expectations for changing practice would facilitate this.

Direction 2 Increase stretch and challenge for all students by supporting teachers individually and in teams to develop coherent approaches to pedagogies that are consistent across the school, challenging and developmentally appropriate for students.

CONDITIONS FOR EFFECTIVE STUDENT LEARNING

How effectively does the school support students to develop resilience and persistence?

Parents are strongly aspirational for their children and highly supportive of the school. The development of student resilience and persistence is a stated goal in the school. Students are highly compliant and eager to please adults and complete tasks. Students are articulate and able to describe a task and what they need to do for high competence. There were some examples of students self-reporting a desire to be stretched and to self-stretch. There were multiple examples in the school of the activation of student voice and leadership. These include some topic choice in some classes, an active SRC and year 7 student action team, school captains and responsibility for school tasks such as traffic monitoring. Whilst student leadership is being developed in the school there were a few examples of the understanding and development of deeper student agency in learning. Evident examples were of high-quality and the school is well-placed to support all teachers to explicitly develop student skills in the context of hard academic learning through student agency and scaffolding of learning.

Many teachers confuse student agency with student voice and student leadership. Voice and leadership are aspects of agency but authentic agency results from student metacognition about learning, which is developed through backwards learning design, daily discussions with students about learning intentions and success criteria, personal learning goals, and evaluation of what was learnt.

Many teachers strongly feel students need to develop higher levels of social and emotional self-management in learning. Various programs and structures have been initiated over time in various year levels. A next step for the school is to develop a common agreed framework for this work.

There is an opportunity to clarify and develop consistency in understanding of, and approach to, the specific skills that teachers need to teach and students need to learn and demonstrate in order to develop resilience and persistence specifically within learning. The Personal and Social Capability Continuum in the Australian Curriculum would facilitate this. The school is well-placed to focus on those skills and capabilities that enable students to enter and engage with higher level learning tasks.

Direction 3 Explicitly support students' resilience for and persistence in challenging learning through explicit, contextualised skill development.

Outcomes of the External School Review 2019

At Magill School R-7, effective leadership provides strategic direction, planning and targeted interventions and the school's improvement processes are evidence-based. The school is providing effective conditions for student learning and there are strong, successful partnerships between the school and families.

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

- Direction 1** Further improve student learning through the use of improved teacher practice, particularly in the area of using regular feedback from students, peers and leadership to make continuous adjustments to teaching in order to maximise each teacher's impact on student learning.
- Direction 2** Increase stretch and challenge for all students by supporting teachers individually and in teams to develop coherent approaches to pedagogies that are consistent across the school, challenging, and developmentally appropriate for students.
- Direction 3** Explicitly support students' resilience for and persistence in challenging learning through explicit, contextualised skill development.

Based on the school's current performance, Magill School R-7 will be externally reviewed again in 2022.



Andrew Wells
A/DIRECTOR
REVIEW, IMPROVEMENT AND
ACCOUNTABILITY



Anne Millard
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
PARTNERSHIPS, SCHOOLS AND
PRESCHOOLS

Mr John Iannunzio
PRINCIPAL
MAGILL 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, 94% of year 1 and 88% of year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. This result represents an improvement in year 1 and little or no change in year 2 from the historic baseline average.

In 2018, the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 91% of year 3 students, 88% of year 5 students and 88% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement under the SEA. For years 3 and 5 this result represents little or no change, and for year 7 this represents a decline from the historic baseline average.

In 2018 year 3 NAPLAN reading, the school achieved within and for years 5 and 7, achieved higher than the results of similar students across government schools.

In 2018, 74% of year 3, 52% of year 5 and 43% 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 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in reading, 79% or 44 out of 56, students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5 in 2018 and 66% or 23 out of 35 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7 in 2018.

Numeracy

In 2018, the numeracy results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 88% of year 3 students, 91% of year 5 students and 87% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For year 3 and 7 this result represents a decline, and for year 5 this represents an improvement from the historic baseline average.

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

In 2018, 62% of year 3, 32% of year 5 and 44% 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.

Between 2016 and 2018, the trend for year 3 has been upwards from 40% to 62%, and for year 7 downwards from 54% to 44% respectively.

For those students who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in numeracy, 68% or 26 out of 38 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5 in 2018, and 73% or 19 out of 26 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7 in 2018.