

Department for Education External School Review

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

Report for Westport Primary School

Conducted in October 2020



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 Greg Graham, Review Officer of the department's Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate and Jodie Kingham, 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 Services Officers (SSOs)
 - Student groups
 - Teachers

School context

Westport Primary School caters for students from reception to year 7. It is situated 15kms from the Adelaide CBD. The enrolment in 2020 is 328. Enrolment at the time of the previous review was 311. The local partnership is Le Fevre Peninsula.

The school has an ICSEA score of 970 and is classified as Category 2 on the Department for Education Index of Educational Disadvantage.

The school population includes 15% Aboriginal students, 13% students with disabilities, 32% students with English as an additional language or dialect (EALD) background, 4% children/young people in care and 44% of students eligible for School Card assistance.

The school leadership team consists of a principal in their 10th year of tenure. Other senior leaders include an assistant principal in wellbeing and engagement, an early years and intervention assistant principal and a literacy coordinator.

There are 25 teachers including 6 in the early years of their career and 9 Step 9 teachers.

The previous ESR or OTE directions were:

- Direction 1** Deepen the culture of improvement and high expectations by harnessing the power of making learning intentions and success criteria explicit and accessible to the students.
- Direction 2** Develop a whole-school agreement about intentional teaching that is tied to the diagnostic use of student achievement data by teachers, in order to develop teacher capacity in self-evaluation of the direct impact of their practice on student achievement and growth.
- Direction 3** Design learning for intellectual stretch for all students all the time, to ensure every student is experiencing learning and opportunities to consistently achieve at a high level across the curriculum.

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

The current principal has been in the position for 10 years. Actions were taken to address the previous ESR directions. Clear, consistent, evidence-based and collaboratively developed agreements in whole-school policies and practices, such as the maths continuum, phonemic awareness program, reception to year 2 'Literature Circles' and 'Top 5' were established. All professional learning directly linked to informing good teaching practice. Accountability, through shared planning, collaboration and moderation is overseen by the leadership team, but is strongly self-directed by individuals and year-level teams. The school is able to track and monitor student progress using data walls, electronic recording and student handover folders.

Teachers use relevant data to inform teaching practice and planning, including English and maths overviews and specialist subject overviews. Individual student needs are analysed through formal testing formats. These are reflected in all classroom planning showing data-informed teaching points. Teachers

are released for building their capacity to improve pedagogy through site-based coaches, external consultants and reference to guidebooks to support implementing the Australian Curriculum. Shared planning, collaboration and moderation and performance development planning processes are evident and reference tailored templates.

The whole school participates in rigorous professional learning around social-emotional literacies, interoception and trauma training. This led to the reform of school procedures around student behaviour management.

Student targets in literacy are strongly practiced across the school and provide a catalyst for improvement and stretch. Intellectual stretch is catered through learning and opportunities in maths enrichment and problem-solving, STEM lessons and enrichment groups, lunchtime clubs and community service. A culture of high expectation exists through an active school motto.

Some elements of the previous directions are still to be addressed and actioned together with strategies identified in the school improvement plan (SIP) and in specific supplementary action plans.

Lines of inquiry

Effective school improvement planning

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

The school leadership team maintained a commitment to collaboratively developing clarity of purpose and alignment of agreements and processes that support high-quality teaching and learning. A whole-school approach in curriculum and wellbeing focus has been strategic in the planning and links with SIP priorities. Action plans were developed and implemented to support SIP goals.

The tracking, monitoring and analysing of progress and achievement data for literacy and mathematics is visible. All staff have access to the electronic data source to update and monitor student progress. Regular SIP updates and check-ins occur throughout the year, and the term 4 data day is valued as an opportunity for reflecting and updating SIP directions. Staff reported this gave a more precise and targeted approach to identify specific teaching points to plan for and teach in class.

School agreements are reached collaboratively, consensually constructed and provide systems and processes to address reading, writing and mathematics. Appointing curriculum leaders and coaches in teaching and learning facilitated a whole-school approach to building staff capacity in teaching of literacy and mathematics.

Restructuring classes to conduct group intervention support and changes to school services officer deployment has been positive in addressing support for all students. Intervention programs are reviewed each term and communicated to parents. The Aboriginal community education officer supports attendance and families of Aboriginal students, as well as monitors the learning wellbeing and progress of individual students.

The next step for the school to consider is continuing to build teacher capacity and practices that reflect the SIP challenge of practice. Ensure the consistency of practice is operating at a high-yield level within the current SIP curriculum focus areas. By strengthening existing practice of involving all staff in the improvement cycle, the school will be well-positioned to ensure quality teaching influences improved student learning.

Direction 1 Further strengthen agreed SIP pedagogical actions that enable all teachers to effectively plan and consistently teach at a high-level across reception to year 7.

Effective teaching and student learning

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

The principal said all work conducted is strongly focused on evidence-based educational research, quality data and a number of models for implementation. The literacy and mathematical approaches adopted at the school allowed teachers to sharpen their focus on intentional teaching.

Staff showed a collective commitment to high expectations of students and developing quality teaching practices that will positively influence learning. The leadership team provides extensive support towards developing these expectations and practices, which teachers appreciate.

All staff have a strong understanding of the teaching approaches in mathematics, writing and literacy (phonics). They identified differentiated approaches they apply to cater for all learners. The pedagogical survey indicated that 61% of teachers rated their ability to differentiate the learning at a high extent: the remaining 39% at a medium level. Using the 3-Star coded task sheets is common practice across the school, with some teachers 'tweaking' them to refine the differentiation for individual students. Several teachers indicated that more work is needed with higher-band students, especially with extension work.

Formative and summative assessment processes varied amongst the teachers, with the majority of staff referring to them to organise ability groups, track progress and refine teaching points. Learning intentions are at the forefront of all teaching actions, and success criteria are presented as evidence of change in student learning.

Learning targets are a strong focus across the school, valued by students, teachers and parents. The 'Top 5' strategies used to check-in on work output are visible and articulated by teachers and students. Students refer to them regularly, and they are seen as 'helping them with their learning'.

Oral and written feedback practices are regularly used to consolidate student learning. Class diaries are valued by parents as a tool to enable parents to monitor progress and offer feedback to support their child.

Next steps to consider include strengthening teacher understanding of student involvement within the planning process, building student understanding and capacity in learner voice, and decision-making about their own learning potential.

Direction 2 **To meet the learning needs of all students, continue development of high-impact teaching and learning strategies aligned to the school's pedagogical framework, with a focus on high learning bands.**

Outcomes of the External School Review 2020

Westport Primary School demonstrates a whole-school culture of continuous improvement, strong sustained leadership, clear school-wide processes and structures, whole-school accountability, and strategic and aligned professional learning. Expectations of students are of the highest level, while aspiration in student achievement characterises the culture. The school is well-positioned to refine established highly-effective practices, whilst exploring new possibilities for the future.

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

- Direction 1** Further strengthen agreed SIP pedagogical actions that enable all teachers to effectively plan and consistently teach at a high-level across reception to year 7.
- Direction 2** To meet the learning needs of all students, continue development of high-impact teaching and learning strategies aligned to the school's pedagogical framework, with a focus on high learning bands.

Based on the school's current performance, Westport Primary School will be externally reviewed again in 2023.



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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 2019, 82% of year 1 and 87% of year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. This result represents an improvement for years 1 and 2, from the historic baseline average.

In 2019, the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 79% of year 3 students, 85% of year 5 students and 86% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For year 3, this result represents little or no change and for years 5 and 7, an improvement, from the historic baseline average.

For 2019, year 3 and 5 NAPLAN reading, the school is achieving within and for year 7, higher than, the results of similar students across government schools.

In 2019, 47% of year 3, 33% of year 5 and 29% of year 7 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN reading bands. For year 3, 5 and 7, this result represents an improvement from the historic baseline average.

For those students in 2019 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in reading, 50%, or 6 out of 12 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5, and 43%, or 3 out of 7 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7.

Numeracy

In 2019, the numeracy results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 84% of year 3 students, 82% of year 5 students and 65% 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, a decline, from the historic baseline average.

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, 42% of year 3, 27% of year 5 and 22% 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.

For those students in 2019 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in numeracy, 64%, or 7 out of 11 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5, and 50%, or 3 out of 6 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7.