

Department for Education

External School Review

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

Report for East Marden Primary School

Conducted in November 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 here, they have all been considered and contribute to the development and directions of this report.

This review was conducted by Simon Harding, Review Officer of the department's Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate and Graham Elliott and Kirsty Trahar, Review Principal.

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 Services Officers (SSOs)
 - Student groups
 - Teachers

School context

East Marden Primary School caters for children from reception to year 7. It is situated 8kms from the Adelaide CBD. The enrolment in 2019 is 695 students and it has been steady for the last five years. The enrolment at the time of the previous review was 645.

The school has an ICSEA score of 1090 and is classified as Category 6 on the Department for Education Index of Educational Disadvantage.

The school population includes 3% Aboriginal students, 5% students with disabilities, 53% students with English as an additional language or dialect (EALD) background, 1 child in care and 14% of families eligible for School Card assistance.

The school leadership team consists of a principal in their 1st year of their 1st tenure, a deputy principal with an inclusion focus and 2 senior leaders – pedagogy and innovation and curriculum and data. There are 2 Band 1 positions – wellbeing and STEM.

There are 41 teachers including 3 in the early years of their career and 14 step 9 teachers.

Previous ESR or OTE directions were:

- Direction 1** Sustain high levels of achievement from reception to Year 7, by ensuring each student can demonstrate high levels of learning against the Australian Curriculum achievement standards and general capabilities.
- Direction 2** Build capacity of staff to implement the school improvement plan and the resulting agreements about innovative pedagogy. Include in this work the use of data and information to plan for targeted teaching and to monitor learning progress over time.

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

The school provided evidence of the processes they have used to implement the directions from their previous review. The school has maintained their high level of academic achievement through staff continuing to familiarise and implement the Australian Curriculum effectively with students. The collaborative planning by teaching teams has supported teacher development in this area, along with professional learning provided by leaders. Teachers are using achievement standards to plan and assess student work.

The school provided professional learning for teachers in inquiry learning which originally focused on one area of learning and has more recently broadened into other areas. Teachers are using this approach to learning widely across the school. Staff have an increasing role in the management of student data and use it to inform teaching and learning programs.

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?

The principal outlined in their presentation the processes the school has undertaken to monitor the impact of actions taken in relation to the priorities throughout the year. Primarily, the leadership team has been responsible for the development and monitoring of the implementation of the plans of action throughout the year. Teaching staff have spent time assessing the impact based on the targets. Staff stated that the teams were not necessarily as connected to the plan due to wanting more clarity of purpose. However, dedicated time in staff meetings for collaborative planning, reflective conversations and feedback surveys has been made available to staff to gain their input on the progress and effectiveness of the plans of action. Governing Council representatives stated that the school has been consulting with and informing them of the progress of the plan as the year has progressed.

Professional learning was closely aligned with the Site Improvement Plan (SIP) with a consultant engaged for each priority. Teachers have worked in teams to collaboratively plan, using the professional learning to inform their planning. Professional learning has been analysed to assess the impact on practice and outcomes for students. Time has been made available for staff to review the data in relation to the targets. Continuing to build processes of authentic consultation which clearly link decisions taken to student data will assist teachers to see the purpose of the work and build their commitment to the plan. Staff shared their keenness to have an active role in the development and monitoring of future plans, as they understand they are ultimately responsible for enacting the actions to support improved student learning outcomes. Staff learning teams are committed to collaborative planning. Ensuring the work of teams is shared across all staff will continue to build common understandings and approaches. Developing clarity about the roles of individuals and the establishment of a consultative group to support improvement work, would strengthen the effective implementation, review and evaluation of the priorities, whilst continuing to build capacity and ownership of the plan by staff.

Direction 1 **Strategically strengthen consultative processes to prioritise the effective identification and implementation of the plans of action whilst monitoring impact of the improvement priorities against the success criteria.**

EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND STUDENT LEARNING

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

The learning data collected at a system level indicates that there are high levels of achievement evidenced by the percentages of students achieving at or above the Standard of Educational Achievement (SEA). There are processes, structures and expectations in place for teachers to support students through the use of a common and agreed assessment schedule and analysing and monitoring of student data. There is some evidence of learning teams using data to support and develop this work collectively. Teachers provided evidence of using data including grouping students, teaching to gaps in learning and identification for support. Teachers provided examples of formative assessment strategies including formal, informal and conferencing, they use with students. The effectiveness and depth of how teachers use data to inform their planning and intentional teaching is strengthening but is not yet consistent across the school.

While teachers clearly have high expectations in relation to student achievement, parents also have high aspirations for their children and they are seeking further challenge and stretch in their child's learning. Parents value the ongoing forms of electronic communication about their child's progress, however they stated that the current reporting through interviews and written reports is not always providing them with the information they need to have a clear understanding about where their child is at in their learning.

Students are clear about the importance of being a resilient learner and can articulate how this applies to their learning. Students shared that effective feedback is important for their learning. Teachers and students talked about students having the opportunity to provide and receive peer feedback and is a strategy that improves their work. The use of rubrics for students is commonly used across sections of the school to support students' understanding of the expectations of the task, and at times provides them with a scaffold to give feedback to their peers. Feedback for learning is a pivotal component of learning improvement at all levels. Teachers' perceptions about what effective feedback for learning looks like and how they share this information with students varies across the school. Embedding common understandings and practices relating to effective feedback will continue to strengthen learning for all students.

Direction 2 Build common understandings and agreements to strengthen the use of effective evidence-based formative assessment and feedback for students which provides challenge and stretch for all learners.

EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND STUDENT LEARNING

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

There are some school-wide practices to make student influence visible, including a student bulletin and some consultation with students in relation to their aspirations and opinions. Inquiry-based learning is a common approach being implemented across the school and students recognise that this approach is closely linked to student engagement in learning through increased autonomy. Teachers are sharing the language of learning with students. Students are able to talk clearly about their learning and which effective practices support them to learn. This work includes the use of learning intentions and success criteria which provide students with an understanding of the intended learning and how to measure their success. Learning intentions and success criteria are used widely across the school. There are some examples of students being involved in the co-construction of success criteria, however practices varied across the school and there are opportunities to develop this work further.

Students and teachers talked about the use of rubrics to support the learning and the provision of feedback, from the teacher and peers. There was some evidence that peer feedback has been scaffolded for students through the use of rubrics.

Individual student goal setting features across the school, however practices varied in relation to the development and focus of these goals. Students shared they are keen to take more responsibility for their learning and to track and monitor their progress. Opportunities for teachers to build the capacity of students to monitor and regulate their own learning through effective feedback, inclusive of the sharing of data and what this means for next steps and targeted goal setting explicitly linked to the data, are areas for further development.

Students at all levels benefit from having opportunities to be active participants and partners in their own learning. While it is acknowledged there is good practice evident in the school, collectively strengthening teacher and student capacity across the school is an area for growth. The provision of planned opportunities for staff and students to work collaboratively, building common understandings and strategies will further strengthen authentic student influence in their learning.

Direction 3 Strengthen the capacity of staff to ensure students have authentic influence and efficacy, enhancing their ability to assess, set learning goals and monitor their own learning.

Outcomes of the External School Review 2019

East Marden Primary School has a welcoming positive culture where staff are clearly committed to offering students a quality learning program. Parents see the school as a school of choice because of its record of high academic achievement, holistic focus on child development, rich cultural diversity and its inclusive practices. The students are articulate and passionate about their learning and the school. Staff both value and are committed to the collaborative learning culture which includes sharing of practice, joint planning and mentoring of new staff. The leadership team is seen as consultative and will actively listen to members of the school community.

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

- Direction 1** Strategically strengthen the structures and consultative processes to prioritise the effective identification and implementation of the plans of action and monitoring progress of the improvement priorities against the success criteria.
- Direction 2** Build common understandings and agreements to strengthen the use of effective evidence-based formative assessment and feedback for students which provides challenge and stretch for all learners.
- Direction 3** Strengthen the capacity of staff to ensure students have authentic influence and efficacy, enhancing their ability to assess, set learning goals and monitor their own learning.

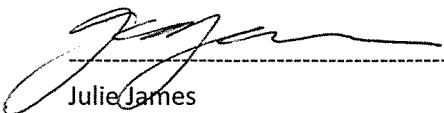
Based on the school's current performance, East Marden Primary School will be externally reviewed again in 2022.



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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 2018, 69% of year 1 and 75% of year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. This result represents a decline for year 1, and little or no change for year 2 from the historic baseline average.

In 2019 the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 93% of year 3 students, 84% of year 5 students and 89% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For year 3, this result represents an improvement, and for years 5 and 7, this represents little or no change from the historic baseline average.

Between 2017 and 2019, the trend for year 3 has been upwards, from 86% to 93%, respectively.

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

In 2019, 71% of year 3, 50% of year 5 and 60% 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 2019 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in reading, 71%, or 35 of 49 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5, and 81%, or 21 of 26 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7.

Numeracy

In 2019, the numeracy results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 88% of year 3 students, 85% of year 5 students and 89% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For years 3, 5 and 7, this result represents little or no change from the historic baseline averages.

For 2019 years 3, 5 and 7 NAPLAN numeracy, the school is achieving within the results of similar groups of students across government schools.

In 2019, 63% of year 3, 36% of year 5 and 66% 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, 60%, or 27 of 45 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5, and 91%, or 19 of 21 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7.