

Department for Education External School Review

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

Report for Modbury School P-7

Conducted in May 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 Julie Bishop , Review Officer of the department's Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate and Wendy Moore, 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

Modbury School P-7 caters for preschool to year 7 students. It is next to Tea Tree Plaza in the North Eastern suburb of Modbury North, 14.6kms from the Adelaide CBD. The enrolment in 2021, as at the February census, is 205. Enrolment at the time of the previous review was 178. The local partnership is Modbury.

The school has a 2020 ICSEA score of 987, classified as Category 4 on the Department for Education Index of Educational Disadvantage.

The school population includes 6% Aboriginal students, 16% students with disabilities, 49% students with English as an additional language or dialect (EALD) background, 2% children/young people in care and 27% of students eligible for School Card assistance.

The school leadership team consists of a Principal in their 5th year of a 5-year tenure, a 1.0FTE Deputy Principal and a 0.6FTE wellbeing leader. There are currently 19 teachers and 4 Step 9 teachers.

The previous ESR or OTE directions were:

- Direction 1 Strengthen and shape improvement through the establishment of a representative management team to oversee consistency and congruence within and across the site's planning processes.**
- Direction 2 Embed consistent understanding and practices in effective pedagogy with a specific focus on learning intentions, success criteria and assessment of reading beyond level 30.**
- Direction 3 Strengthen authentic student influence for learning across all learning by sharing and embedding the language of learning and intellectual stretch and challenge across the site.**

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

Direction 1

A representative management team was established. Currently known as 'Leading Improvement Team', this consists of a teaching representative from each learning community and specialist teacher. Policy review and development, Literacy and Numeracy Agreements, and school improvement plan (SIP) review are focus areas for this term.

Direction 2

Learning intentions are visible, used in everyday teaching and learning, and success criteria used with students. Assessment processes are included in the literacy agreement; processes are embedded to ensure check-in with student progress and teacher uptake of assessments, using this to plan and program.

Direction 3

Professional learning communities (PLCs) have embedded teacher professional learning around student improvement, planning and programming with high expectations, knowing where students are, and the next steps required for further improvement. Using learning design to support regular learning sprints, where teachers identify an area for improvement and have peer observational feedback, embeds the language of learning, intellectual stretch and challenge across the school in a rigorous and supportive manner.

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 panel noted a strong connection and ownership of the SIP by all staff. Leadership are responsible for developing key actions and completion of the SIP; these are then disseminated to all staff. Staff identified that all members of the school community are collectively responsible for the implementation of the SIP. The school is to be commended for their comprehensive approach to school improvement planning.

The school identified 2 SIP goals – to increase the percentage of students meeting or exceeding the standard of educational achievement, and maintaining higher bands in NAPLAN numeracy and reading. Staff provided a diverse range of strategies to increase and sustain improvement in numeracy, including but not limited to, the following:

- introduction of three-part structured maths lessons
- collection and use of diagnostic data
- learning sprints implemented, with teachers assessing their personal progress.

Likewise, work undertaken in literacy included, but is not limited to:

- explicitly teaching reading strategies
- regular, planned assessment and data collection
- formative Running Records.

Staff acknowledged that improving mathematical dispositions could be strengthened via planned analysis and sharing of data from BliN (Big Ideas in Number) and intervention assessments within learning communities. It was noted that an analysis of the impact of observations in maths would be beneficial. Staff identified that clarifying misconceptions, using diagnostic data, and improving mathematical dispositions from the perspective of the student were areas for further development.

Only 6% of students during interviews identified that reading was challenging. Several staff reported that using challenging texts across a range of learning areas was an area for further development. It was also noted that attention should be given to the inclusion of nonfiction texts to strengthen opportunities for students to be consistently challenged in their learning.

The school is well-positioned to strengthen opportunities for students to be regularly challenged in their reading, supported via a comprehensive assessment tool, which includes fluency, accuracy, and comprehension and is applicable across all year levels.

Direction 1 To collaboratively develop and embed a whole-school approach that consistently provides opportunities for all students to be challenged in their reading.

Effective teaching and student learning

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

Staff are committed to ensuring high-achieving students are supported to be challenged in their learning and noted a strong commitment to pre- and post-assessments to support next steps in their learning. Staff acknowledged the need for students to be regularly challenged in their learning.

Teacher reflections included the following:

- differentiation is an area for further development with specific reference to intellectual stretch
- learning design through multiple entry points was a significant factor in effective differentiation
- work undertaken in 'Back to front' maths was significant in strengthening pedagogical practices.

In a survey conducted during the ESR, when reflecting on a recent unit of work:

- forty-two percent of staff identified that learning intentions were achieved to a high degree, only 25% indicated that students understood the learning intentions to the same degree
- fifty-eight percent of staff identified that success criteria provided clarity to a high degree, with 25% indicating students understood success criteria to the same degree
- the school is well-placed to co-design learning intentions and success criteria with students
- twenty-five percent of staff identified pedagogies used were embedded to a high degree.

The school provided extensive evidence of individual goal-setting. Students, staff, and parents collaboratively set learning goals during three-way conferences at the beginning of the year.

Several staff identified that planned opportunities for students to be partners in co-designing and collaboratively setting their personal learning goals was an area for further consideration.

Currently, additional support for students occurs outside of the classroom. Consideration could be given to provision of differentiation within the class.

Conversations during the ESR included an observation that instruction was often focused on the 'middle'. The school is well-positioned to strengthen and embed effective differentiation and task design across year levels and areas of learning. Sharing this work with students and their families will further strengthen the collective understandings of effective pedagogical practices across the school.

Direction 2 Strengthen and embed effective differentiation and task design across year levels and areas of learning.

Effective teaching and student learning

How effectively are the school's professional learning and performance and development processes in building teacher capacity?

The panel noted established structures that provide ongoing opportunities for staff to undertake leadership across a range of levels. Establishment of learning improvement teams, comprised of one member from each professional learning community, provides planned opportunities for staff to lead within and across sectors of schooling. Professional learning communities operate across like-year levels.

The PLC structure has been effective in supporting and strengthening professional learning across the site. Staff said that they were provided with multiple targeted opportunities to undertake professional learning. Some teachers identified that additional allocated, planned time to trial, review and reflect on new learning would be beneficial.

Performance and development processes include 2 formal meetings and observations by the Principal. Peer observations and learning sprints supported staff in building and strengthening their personal capacity. Teachers, during discussions, identified that a strong culture of collaboration and informal mentoring was apparent across the site. Reflections from early years staff, at the time of the ESR, identified that they would appreciate additional time to identify and implement their own personal goals that are specific to their PLC.

Consideration could be given to the review of current PLC structures to incorporate mentoring that is focused on literacy and numeracy. Reflections from early years staff, at the time of the ESR, identified that they would appreciate additional time to identify and implement their own personal goals that are specific to their PLC. Teachers are strongly supported by peers and as such informal mentoring is a significant factor in building the capacity of teachers to lead learning. The panel noted a strong whole-school commitment to building and sustaining leadership capacity across the site. The school implemented processes that enable staff to demonstrate leadership skills across a range of contexts.

Rotational opportunities are available for staff to be involved in developing their personal leadership capacity within the site, including undertaking leadership responsibilities when a member of the leadership team is absent.

Direction 3 Build and strengthen teacher capacity through analysing planned observations of peers within the site and across the partnership.

Outcomes of the External School Review 2021

The school is to be commended for their steadfast approach to ongoing improvement. The comprehensive work undertaken was driven by stable leadership, a strong school culture and a collective commitment to ongoing improvement. Intentional success criteria for students are embedded within the SIP. The panel noted a clear focus on strengthening and sustaining the capacity of all educators and supporting them in achieving growth for every student.

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

- Direction 1 To collaboratively develop and embed a whole school approach that consistently provides opportunities for all students to be challenged in their reading.**
- Direction 2 Strengthen and embed effective differentiation and task design across year levels and areas of learning.**
- Direction 3 Build and strengthen teacher capacity through analysing planned observations of peers within the site and across the partnership.**

Based on the school's current performance, Modbury School P-7 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 2019, 65% of year 1 and 68% of year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. These results represent little or no change from the historic baseline average.

In 2019, the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 50% of year 3 students, 68% of year 5 students and 65% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For year 3, this result represents a decline from the historic baseline average. For year 5, this result represents little or no change. For year 7, this result represents a decline from the historic baseline average.

For 2019 year 3 NAPLAN reading, the school is achieving lower than the results of similar students across government schools.

Between 2017 and 2019, the school has consistently achieved lower in year 3 NAPLAN reading relative to the results of similar groups of students across government schools.

In 2019, 14% of year 3, 9% of year 5 and 24% of year 7 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN reading bands. For year 3, this result represents a decline from the historic baseline average.

For those students in 2019 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in reading, 33%, or 2 out of 6 students, from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5, and 100%, or 3 out of 3 students from year 3, remain in the upper bands at year 7.

Numeracy

In 2019, the numeracy results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 43% of year 3 students, 55% 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 a decline from the historic baseline average. For year 7, this result represents little or no change from the historic baseline average.

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

In 2019, 7% of year 3, no students from year 5 and 24% of year 7 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN numeracy bands. For year 3, this result represents a decline from the historic baseline average.

Between 2017 and 2019, the trend for year 7 has been downwards from 77% to 65%.

For those students in 2019 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in numeracy, no students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5, and 100%, or 1 out of 1 student from year 3, remains in the upper bands at year 7.