

Department for Education

External School Review

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

Report for Hendon Primary school

Conducted in November 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 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 Debbie Grzeczowski, Review Officer of the department's Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate and Michael Washington, 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 Support Officers (SSOs)
 - Student groups
 - Teachers

School context

Hendon Primary School caters for children from reception to year 7. It is situated 9kms from the Adelaide CBD. The enrolment in 2019 is 375 students. Enrolment is declining over the last 5 years. Enrolment at the time of the previous review was 425.

The school has an ICSEA score of 961 and is classified as Category 3 on the Department for Education Index of Educational Disadvantage.

The school population includes 11% Aboriginal students, 12% students with disabilities, 20% students with English as an additional language or dialect (EALD) background, 7 children/young people in care, and 53% of families eligible for School Card assistance.

The school leadership team consists of a principal in the second year of their second tenure at the school. The school has a deputy principal, student wellbeing leaders, a curriculum/maths coordinator and a senior leader in preschool. There are 26 teachers including 1 in the early years of their career and 14 Step 9 teachers.

Previous ESR or OTE directions were:

- Direction 1** Strategically embed the agreed and defined pedagogical approaches that deliver 'challenge and stretch' for all learners across the school to a high level of consistency in all classes.
- Direction 2** Expand opportunities for staff to work collaboratively to deprivatise teaching practice within the evident culture of trust, sharing and developing 'growth mindsets'.
- Direction 3** Support the delivery of consistent and connected curriculum and pedagogical approaches through performance and development strategies that encompass focused classroom observations and formative feedback for staff.

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

The previous directions have guided the school improvement agenda since the last review with leaders strategically creating effective processes to ensure teacher participation, whilst providing a high level of accountability. Significant professional learning has been a feature at the school over the previous three years which has resulted in students displaying increased positive dispositions to maths.

The continuation of learning teams enables staff to share and refine their practice by providing a forum to analyse, research and plan their practice. Peer observations have also helped to deprivatise practice. Strong connections with the partnership has enabled staff to moderate work with colleagues.

Work on the previous directions has enabled the school to collect and interrogate data as part of whole-school practice. The use of a data collection schedule has refined and produced cohesion around data. The increased interrogation and triangulation of data has enabled students to be identified and supported through evidence-based interventions.

Whilst significant work has occurred in all of the previous directions, there is still opportunity to embed practice across foundation to year 7.

Lines of inquiry

EFFECTIVE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

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

The principal discussed how the School Planning Committee (SPC) participated in a rigorous process of data analysis which clearly directed the challenges of practice for the Site Improvement Plan (SIP). As the SPC participated in a thorough annual process of self-review, the creation of the current SIP was a continuation of 'usual' business. Whilst the panel acknowledged the role of the SPC, the panel believes there is an opportunity to involve all staff in the annual self-review day to further deepen understanding and ownership.

Leadership have worked with staff to set up supportive structures and processes to build teacher collaboration and drive the improvement agenda in the form of learning teams, professional learning in allocated staff meeting time and a maths committee, all aligned to the SIP focus. This has been further resourced through shared release time.

Whilst staff at Hendon Primary School are familiar with the learning team's process, some staff report being unclear of the purpose and focus of learning teams, and that of the SPC. The panel felt this provides a timely opportunity to work with staff to ensure clarity of purpose, process and roles of each group, whilst understanding their potential as drivers for collaboration and improvement.

Whilst all staff are aware of the SIP focus, the panel found mixed interpretations of a core moral purpose. The panel felt there is opportunity for staff and students to collaboratively reflect and refine their core moral purpose and share this with the wider community.

Refreshing key documents, which underpin practice and pedagogy, will support a systematic approach for continuous improvement. Having regular and formalised observations with clear feedback for improvement will strengthen targeted and timely feedback to further build teacher practice. Clear structures and processes, to monitor and observe teacher practice and linked to the narrow focus of the SIP, will provide rigour and support a cycle of continuous improvement. Key documentation will provide coherence and accountability to improve student outcomes.

Direction 1 **Ensure pedagogical coherence by refreshing key documentation to guide teacher practice, supported through focused observations.**

EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND STUDENT LEARNING

How effectively are teachers supporting students to improve their learning?

Staff at Hendon Primary School display a strong intent to support students in all aspects of their learning and are constantly looking to improve their own practice. Staff conduct peer observations as a means of sharing practice and building capacity. Whilst this process is valued by staff, the panel felt there is opportunity to amplify the process by providing rigour to critical feedback for improvement.

Teachers collect a range of data and conduct pre and post testing to monitor growth. However, the panel found varying degrees of how this was being used to inform learning for all students as differentiated lessons were not evidenced as consistent practice across the school.

All identified students have a current individual learning plan to support and direct their learning. SSOs deliver a mix of class and group support as well as providing quality, evidenced-based intervention. The school is currently looking to move all identified students onto the department's current One Plan. Most students with whom the panel spoke, talked of their work being 'too easy' or 'just right'. The exception to this was a 'genius hour' in upper primary classes where students talked of a productive struggle which enabled high level stretch and challenge.

The panel saw some evidence of excellent practice where clear learning intentions and success criteria containing self-assessment guides are used to motivate and stretch learners. Attention to learning design provided opportunities for students to reach high achievement. Where good practice was apparent, students can articulate their learning and have a full understanding of their next steps to improve. Opportunity exists to diffuse this practice across all classes to enable all students to receive stretch and challenge. The panel felt there was great opportunity to strategically harness and provide a platform for these 'experts' to work collaboratively with others to ensure consistency in pedagogy and provide differentiated learning with stretch and challenge for all learners. A published approach to defining pedagogical practice at Hendon Primary School will further support coherence and consistency.

Direction 2 **Ensure all students receive differentiated learning with appropriate stretch and challenge through collaboratively strengthening teachers' capacity in learning design.**

CONDITIONS FOR EFFECTIVE STUDENT LEARNING

To what extent does the school provide conditions for effective student learning?

Staff at Hendon Primary School create positive learning environments with scaffolds and prompts visible in all classrooms. However, these prompts are predominately generic published scaffolds and lacked cohesion. The panel felt there is opportunity to strengthen learning support through displaying examples of student work, providing tangible aspirational examples and further support a focus on learning.

The panel evidenced variance in students owning their personal data and using this to set learning goals and targets. The strategic intent to develop targets with students represents teacher understanding that students having ownership of, and engagement with, their learning is key to maximising potential success. The panel felt there is opportunity for staff and students to collaboratively develop a common understanding and approach to what student influence in learning looks like.

Students have opportunity for leadership through a successful Student Representative Council (SRC) but this is predominately of an organisational nature and is external to classroom learning. Students reported wanting more ownership of their learning and articulated the need for success criteria to help them monitor their progress and inform them of their next steps in learning. Whilst the panel evidenced most classes using learning intentions, these were lengthy and not recorded in a child friendly language. This resulted in a lack of understanding by some students and uncertainty of expectations of tasks.

Students at Hendon Primary School have the opportunity to become partners in their own learning by being provided with consistency and clarity in what they are to learn, the purpose of their learning and how they can be successful. When teachers discuss and collaboratively develop the criteria with their students, impact on learning is heightened. Whilst some teachers routinely ask for student feedback and explore learning dispositions this was not evidenced as consistent practice. Implementing and embedding processes which enable all students to have regular opportunities to provide input into their learning will deepen their ownership and promote their sense of themselves as learners.

Direction 3 **To strengthen and embed student agency within learning, provide opportunities for all students to provide feedback, set individual learning goals and establish clear learning intentions and success criteria.**

Outcomes of the External School Review 2019

Hendon Primary School has a positive culture, a deep sense of community and welcoming atmosphere. Students report a strong sense of pride in their school and articulate feeling safe and happy at school. The school provides a variety of learning opportunities and extracurricular opportunities which are appreciated by the community. There is a strong focus on learning with staff seeking ways to further improve and refine their practice. Parents find staff approachable and express satisfaction with student support and learning. Governing Council expressed a high level of trust and support for the school's leadership team who have strategically aligned staffing and resources to support the school's improvement agenda. The school maintains a strong connection to local partnership schools and the local high school.

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

- Direction 1 Ensure pedagogical coherence by refreshing key documentation to guide teacher practice, supported through focused observations.
- Direction 2 Ensure all students receive differentiated learning with appropriate stretch and challenge through collaboratively strengthening teachers' capacity in learning design.
- Direction 3 To strengthen and embed student agency within learning, provide opportunities for all students to provide feedback, set individual learning goals and establish clear learning intentions and success criteria.

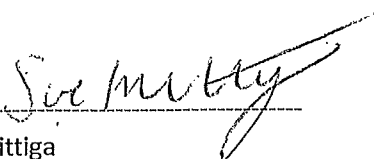
Based on the school's current performance, Hendon Primary School will be externally reviewed again in 2022.



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Sue Mittiga
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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, 47% of year 1 and 51% of year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. This result represents a decline for years 1 and 2, from the historic baseline average.

In 2019, the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 76% of year 3 students, 79% of year 5 students and 82% 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, this represents an improvement, from the historic baseline average.

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

In 2019, 45% of year 3, 23% of year 5 and 33% 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.

Between 2017 and 2019, the trend for year 3 has been upwards, from 30% to 45%.

For those students in 2019 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in reading, 70%, or 7 out of 10 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5, and 65%, or 11 out of 17 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7.

Numeracy

In 2019, the numeracy results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 64% of year 3 students, 75% of year 5 students and 86% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For year 3, this result represents a decline, and for years 5 and 7, this represents an improvement, from the historic baseline average.

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

In 2019, 19% of year 3, 11% of year 5 and 28% of year 7 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN numeracy bands. For year 3, this result represents little or no change from the historic baseline average.

For those students in 2019 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in numeracy, 50%, or 4 out of 8 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5, and 87%, or 7 out of 8 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7.