

# Department for Education

## External School Review

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

### Report for Naracoorte Primary School

Conducted in October 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 Greg Graham, Review Officer of the department's Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate and Brenton Conradi, 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 representatives
  - School Support Officers (SSOs)
  - Student groups
  - Teachers

## School context

Naracoorte Primary School caters for children from reception to year 7. It is situated 335kms from the Adelaide CBD. The enrolment in 2019 is 437 students. Enrolment has fluctuated over the last 5 years. Enrolment during the previous review was 441.

The school has an ICSEA score of 1001 and is classified as Category 5 on the Department for Education Index of Educational Disadvantage.

The school population includes 2% Aboriginal students, 5% students with disabilities, 4% students with English as an additional language or dialect (EALD) background, no children in care and 50% of families eligible for School Card assistance.

The school leadership team consists of a principal in the third year of their tenure at the school. The school has a deputy principal, an assistant principal and a wellbeing coordinator.

## Previous ESR or OTE directions were:

- Direction 1** Challenge and support all students to achieve higher levels by using assessment information to identify starting points, set improvement targets and monitor effectiveness of teaching strategies.
- Direction 2** Strengthen the use of formative assessment processes to enable all students to demonstrate their full potential against the standards of the Australian Curriculum, initially in mathematics.
- Direction 3** Strengthen the role of Governing Council in helping to shape the directions of the school and the engagement of parents as partners in their children's learning.

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

The current principal has been in their position for three years and has led the implementation of the previous directions. The following actions have been undertaken in response to the directions: staff analyse data for their upcoming student cohort which is then compared to PAT and NAPLAN data; teachers focus on NAPLAN data to highlight top band students which is utilised as a starting point for differentiation and extension maths groups held for students in years 5 to 7. This program was commented on by parents, students and staff.

Literacy intervention programs have been introduced for over 50 students from years 2 to 5. In 2019, the school introduced a whole-school literacy program and QuickSmart, with staff undergoing training in these intervention programs. The Site Improvement Plan (SIP) Challenge of Practice, related to the whole-school literacy program, is taught in all classes across reception to year 2, along with a spelling program from years 3 to 7 to assist with consistency of spelling across the site. Self-managing and growth mindset strategies are offered to all students.

Training and development with the Learning Design, Assessment and Moderation (LDAM) strategy has been a focus with all staff completing a STEM unit of work with an emphasis on using formative assessment. Professional learning on metacognitive reflection has enabled staff to be more active in providing feedback with extending students with their learning as the next step.

In 2017, an education sub-committee consisting of parents and teachers was formed and meets regularly. This committee set the new vision and implemented the new ASPIRE values of the school. During the review, the school values were commented on favourably by all staff, students and parents and is seen as the platform which determines the social and academic expectation from all members of the community. This sub-committee is very proactive and reports to governing council on current educational issues and directions.

The panel recognised that some elements of the previous directions are now linked to the SIP.

## Lines of inquiry

### EFFECTIVE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

#### *To what extent has the school drawn on evidence of best practice to determine strategies and actions for improvement?*

Changing teacher practice requires intentional strategic actions and by drawing on best-practice evidence, schools can optimise their efforts to support teachers to change and improve. The review panel recognised that the school has identified specific programs within their SIP with the focus on targeted cohorts. The panel observed specific literacy programs in action with teachers, SSOs and students being able to articulate the purpose and processes of these programs.

The synthetic phonics program for reception to year 2 students focuses on reading fluency, speaking and writing, with a student-centred approach to vocabulary growth and spelling development through sounds, patterns and meaning for years 3 -7 students. Intervention programs exist to support and track targeted students. Student achievement data is collated and distributed at the end of the year as part of the new class structure planning process. The majority of staff using the learning tools associated with the literacy program, have recognised improvement in student learning and engagement. It has also improved knowledge and skills within their practice. Students and parents were able to describe the reading and spelling programs and how it works in the classroom. SSOs recognised that the intervention programs introduced have made positive impacts on student learning.

Professional learning in literacy and formative learning is led by curriculum coordinators and has been part of the partnerships LDAM strategy. The recent STEM work has consolidated elements of the formative process, however the panel viewed that the consolidation of the formative assessment cycle is an area for further development. The next steps for the school is to revisit learning agreements in literacy and numeracy that incorporates a formative learning loop along with evidenced-based practices and processes that will enable a consistent approach to learning from reception to year 7. The leadership team is the catalyst for linking the SIP goals and Challenges of Practice, along with implementing systems and processes to effect and monitor pedagogical change.

**Direction 1 To improve student learning outcomes build on the consistency and commitment to the implementation and monitoring of quality, evidenced-based practices amongst teachers that supports the congruence of learning from reception to year 7.**

## EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND STUDENT LEARNING

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

There is strong evidence of collegiality across the school, in particular within year level teams. Differentiation strategies varied according to year levels with pockets of strength in some year level teams. The pedagogical survey indicated that teachers' use of formative assessment data and information to impact their planning showed 61% staff rated themselves at a medium to low extent. Formative assessment processes varied amongst the teachers. The vast majority of staff are successfully implementing, displaying and referring to learning intentions and success criteria. Although student learning goals were visible, it was not consistent and there are pockets of teachers using goal setting at a deep level. Feedback to students varied amongst teachers with the main strategy being oral feedback, however some teachers provide written feedback. The teacher survey indicated that 73% rated their use of feedback to help students to improve in the medium range, with 13% indicating that they needed to improve their use of feedback with future planning.

Interview responses from both teachers and students indicated that the sharing of achievement data was 'pocketed' across the school. The students interviewed referenced their grades as a source of knowing how they were going with their work and knew that a 'C' level grade was satisfactory. Some classes use rubrics to illustrate what a student needs to do to achieve a higher grade. Students indicated that some classes offer extension work through the use of worksheets along with some extracurricular activities in mathematics. 55 percent of teachers rated their ability at a medium extent to create opportunities for stretch and challenge and enable students to apply their skills. Oral responses from the majority of students indicated that they wanted more challenge in their learning.

The building blocks to differentiate curriculum for all learners is already ready within the school. The next steps for the school is to revisit how data is used to inform planning and instruction. The school is poised to combine and implement this information with the SIP Challenges of Practice and teaching approaches under the guidance from the leadership team.

**Direction 2**     **To provide differentiated learning opportunities for all students, build teacher capacity and efficacy in using achievement data to monitor learner progress, inform the learning design and action high yield teaching practices, to ensure a consistent approach from reception to year 7.**

## Outcomes of the External School Review 2019

Naracoorte Primary School has demonstrated growth in student achievement at or above what would be reasonably expected of a school in a similar context. The school is providing effective conditions for student learning. Parents and teachers talked about the strengths of the school being the community feel and support offered to students.

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

- Direction 1** To improve student learning outcomes build on the consistency and commitment to the implementation and monitoring of quality evidenced-based practices amongst teachers that supports the congruence of learning from reception to year 7.
- Direction 2** To provide differentiated learning opportunities for all students, build teacher capacity and efficacy in using achievement data to monitor learner progress, inform the learning design and action high yield teaching practices.

Based on the school's current performance, Naracoorte 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, 65% of year 1 and 83% of year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. This result represents little or no change for year 1, and an improvement for year 2 students from the historic baseline average.

In 2019, the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 89% of year 3 students, 84% of year 5 students and 79% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against 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.

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

In 2019, 60% of year 3, 35% of year 5 and 25% 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 5 has been upwards, from 25% to 35%.

For those students in 2019 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in reading, 57%, or 12 out of 21 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5, and 50%, or 15 out of 30 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7.

### Numeracy

In 2019, the numeracy results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 83% of year 3 students, 78% of year 5 students and 87% 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 little or no change from the historic baseline average.

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

In 2019, 38% of year 3, 22% of year 5 and 25% 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 2017 and 2019, the trend for year 7 has been upwards, from 9% to 25%.

For those students in 2019 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in numeracy, 63%, or 10 out of 16 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5, and 61%, or 14 out of 23 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7.