

Department for Education

External School Review

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

Report for Allenby Gardens 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 Tanya Oshinsky, Review Officer of the department's Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate and Vanessa Mortimer, 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
 - School Services Officers (SSOs)
 - Student groups
 - Teachers

School context

Allenby Gardens Primary School caters for children from preschool to year 7. It is situated 6kms from the Adelaide CBD. The enrolment in 2019 is 505. Enrolment at the time of the previous review was 475. The local partnership is Inner West.

The school has an ICSEA score of 1042, and is classified as Category 5 on the Department for Education Index of Educational Disadvantage.

The school population includes 2% Aboriginal students, 8% students with disabilities, 25% students with English as an additional language or dialect (EALD) background, 1 child/young person in care and 18% of families eligible for School Card assistance.

The school leadership team consists of a principal in their 5th year of tenure, a deputy principal, an assistant principal and a curriculum coordinator.

There are 36 teachers including 5 in the early years of their career and 17 Step 9 teachers.

The previous ESR or OTE directions were:

- Direction 1** Provide direction and consistency in planning and review processes by aligning the vision and values of the school with long-term strategic directions and short-term improvement planning.
- Direction 2** Accelerate the learning of students in mathematics by ensuring professional learning translates into consistent practice across classes. Include explicit expectations for student achievement in whole school agreements and align with professional learning and performance improvement processes. Clarify the leadership of pedagogy and curriculum to ensure coherence across the school.
- Direction 3** Increase the number of students demonstrating high level learning outcomes by consistently providing challenging learning experiences for all children and using collaborative practices to support transitions and consistent approaches from preschool to year 7.

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

There is clear evidence of strategic processes that have shaped the improvement journey at Allenby Gardens Primary School, in direct response to the previous directions. Intentional time has been taken over the four year period to build solid foundations required for targeted improvement. Focussed attention in reviewing all school agreements and processes, in consultation with staff, has led to a culture of trust, respect, collaboration and internal accountability.

Mathematics has been a continuous focus, supported by targeted professional learning, a curriculum coordinator and staff meeting time allocated to Professional Learning Teams (PLTs), in building staff capacity to self-drive the improvement agenda. Staff talk passionately about the structures that enable them to work together, in building consistency in practice across their year level. The dedicated commitment and enthusiasm of teachers to continuously improve their practice is also commendable.

There is continuing work for the school in building upon evidenced effective practices for each year level into whole-school agreed and embedded consistent practice. Further attention to consistently provide challenging learning experiences for all students as part of daily practice, is another area for

refinement. The journey to date has resulted in positive progress in student NAPLAN outcomes for many datasets. The panel noted that the established culture of sharing practice and being focussed on the pedagogy of quality teaching and learning to enhance classroom practice, places the school well for future improvement work.

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 Site Improvement Plan (SIP) was developed through a consultative process with teachers, using data analysis of student achievement. Student Services Officers (SSOs) and governing council representatives stated that the SIP had been provided to them and expressed confidence in the directions of the school. Two of the three goals in the SIP continue to deepen the ongoing focus in mathematics, while the third goal in writing, is a new addition to the SIP plan. Many teachers are also embracing 'Inquiry' learning.

It was evident to the panel that teachers are positively engaging in the improvement work of the SIP and are implementing new initiatives into their classroom practice. While some teachers acknowledged that taking on many new practices was at times overwhelming, the time to explore without "pressure" and the support from leadership, has fostered a growth mindset about change. Teachers are encouraged to trial initiatives this year with an intent for deeper application in 2020. Leaders noted that teachers' enthusiasm for improvement has resulted in higher levels of engagement and implementation in pedagogies or programs currently in the 'trial' phase than expected. Teachers stated that leaders have provided the tools and resourcing that enable them to confidently progress the SIP agenda.

The panel evidenced the use of Gantt charts and a 'traffic light' system in monitoring the implementation of actions outlined in the SIP during staff meetings. The next step is to measure and evaluate the impact of those actions on student outcomes, which is a critical component of school improvement. Further developing the success criteria in the SIP, which specifically outline expected student learning and achievement from actions, will enable teachers to regularly self-assess and review their practice against the SIP, as part of a comprehensive cycle of monitoring and review. This will in turn strengthen teacher connectedness to the SIP. There is a sound foundation for this work, given the strong commitment to improvement and change that is apparent across the school.

Direction 1 **Strengthen self-review processes that regularly monitor impact of actions against the SIP success criteria to ensure agreed actions and strategies are having the desired impact on student outcomes.**

EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND STUDENT LEARNING

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

Data that informs teaching and learning is an expectation at Allenby Gardens Primary School. A data schedule highlights expectations of what data is to be collected and when. Teachers pass their data to leaders who return it collated via spreadsheets. Teachers frequently develop and use pre and post-tests to measure student learning. Students told the panel they had little understanding of how they were going outside of test results and reports or “because the teacher tells them”. They expressed wanting more information about their learning and to be challenged further. Exploring other ways of assessing students, including ways they can demonstrate their learning and sharing learning data with students, are areas for further development. See Saw provides one avenue for sharing learning with students and their families.

Application of the current literacy and numeracy agreement occurs in varying strengths across the school. Both agreements refer to the use of learning intentions and success criteria, providing ongoing feedback and differentiation. Differentiating and designing tasks through knowledge of individual student achievement, which is regularly tracked and monitored, was not in clear evidence during the review. Teaching was found to be mostly pitched at ‘middle’ learners and then adjusted. Learning intentions and success criteria were evident in most classrooms to some degree and the panel heard that staff are beginning to explore wave intervention as a strategy to support differentiated learning. While it is evident that staff clearly want to attend to the varied learning needs of their students, revisiting rich task design that effectively incorporates these high yield strategies would greatly enhance learning experiences.

Teachers provided examples of formative assessment tools used to gauge learning and their intent to provide constructive feedback. Formative assessment and feedback that moves the learning on, during the learning, and eliciting feedback from students about learning, are acknowledged as continuing areas for growth. These strategies, along with learning intentions, success criteria and sharing assessments with students, will greatly enhance students’ ability to self-assess their learning and progress. Once students can benchmark their learning, they can then develop SMARTAR goals that are regularly monitored and reviewed for daily stretch in learning.

Direction 2 Increase the number of students achieving the SEA and Higher Bands by strengthening formative assessment, reciprocal feedback and the use of learning intentions and success criteria, to differentiate learning for stretch and challenge.

EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP

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

The panel evidenced clear alignment between the SIP, professional development processes, targeted professional learning and strategic resourcing, enabling teachers to successfully implement agreed practices in the classroom. Professional learning is prioritised in staff meetings with minimal time allocated to administrative tasks. Recent strategic professional learning has included 'Seven Steps in Writing', 'Functional Grammar' and 'Inquiry learning'. SSOs are appreciative of being included in professional learning and parents see whole-staff professional development as a strength of the school.

In addition to professional learning, strengthening the capacity of teachers is fostered through a variety of opportunities. Sharing expertise through staff meetings is encouraged and a maths coordinator has supported the work of Professional Learning Teams (PLTs) in mathematics. All staff were encouraged to apply for a 'Change-makers' program, from which 5 teachers now lead the inquiry focus. Conversation with the Change-makers highlighted the opportunity to use their work in inquiry to strengthen formative assessment, feedback, learning intentions and success criteria, leading change in further developing quality pedagogical practice. Plans are also underway for the introduction of Team Leaders for each PLT to further drive the impetus for improvement.

Intentional reframing and rebuilding of PLTs over time has led to a highly collegial and collaborative staff culture where time in staff meetings is seen by teachers as being generously provided to foster new learning, professional dialogue and consistency of practice. Learning Sprints have been introduced, where teachers work in year level PLTs to collaboratively plan, share practice and review units of work in four week cycles. There is a further expectation that PLTs share good practice through the staff meeting schedule so that all teachers have an opportunity to gain from the learning of their colleagues. PLTs, shared NIT and learning sprints are highly valued by teachers and SSOs even reflect on the positive changes they have seen through these processes. The panel noted that staff continue to trial, share and celebrate, however deeper implementation and sustainability of agreed practice over time needs attention. Leaders have already identified this as the next step in the evolution of PLTs.

Direction 3 Identify, document and embed effective whole-school pedagogical approaches by strengthening PLT processes that critically reflect, evaluate and amplify practices that have the greatest impact on student outcomes.

Outcomes of the External School Review 2019

Data collected at a system level indicates that there is continued growth in students achieving at or above the Department for Education Standard of Education Achievement (SEA) over time, particularly for mathematics. A commitment to improvement and change is apparent across the school. The panel found staff to be deeply engaged in the improvement work of the school and that a high level of positivity exists from all stakeholders. A strength of the school is the commitment to building the capacity of staff and fostering leadership. The school's pursuit of 'excellence' as one of the values, and the growth mindset, demonstrated in both teachers and students, positions the school well for future improvement work.


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

- Direction 1** Strengthen self-review processes that regularly monitor impact of actions against the SIP success criteria to ensure agreed actions and strategies are having the desired impact on student outcomes.
- Direction 2** Increase the number of students achieving the SEA and Higher Bands by strengthening formative assessment, reciprocal feedback and the use of learning intentions and success criteria, to differentiate learning for stretch and challenge.
- Direction 3** Identify, document and embed effective whole-school pedagogical approaches by strengthening PLT processes that critically reflect, evaluate and amplify practices that have the greatest impact on student outcomes.

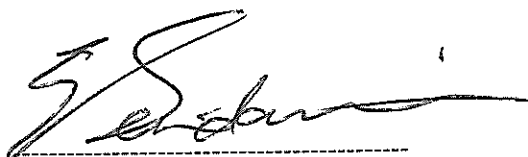
Based on the school's current performance, Allenby Gardens Primary School will be externally reviewed again in 2022.



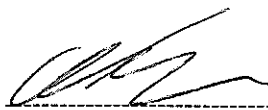
Andrew Wells
A/DIRECTOR
REVIEW, IMPROVEMENT AND
ACCOUNTABILITY



Anne Millard
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
PARTNERSHIPS, SCHOOLS AND
PRESCHOOLS



Yuni Seindanis
PRINCIPAL
ALLENBY GARDENS PRIMARY SCHOOL



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, 73% of year 1 and 82% 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 91% of year 3 students, 78% of year 5 students and 91% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For years 3 and 7, this result represents an improvement, and for year 5, this represents little or no change, from the historic baseline average.

Between 2017 and 2019, the trend for year 3 has been upwards, from 76% to 91%, and for year 7 from 80% to 91%.

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

In 2019, 55% of year 3, 26% 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.

For those students in 2019 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in reading, 55%, or 16 out of 29 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5, and 41%, or 7 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 88% of year 3 students, 71% of year 5 students and 84% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For years 3 and 7, this result represents an improvement, and for year 5, this result represents a decline from the historic baseline average.

Between 2017 and 2019, the trend for year 3 has been upwards, from 73% to 88%.

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, 41% of year 3, 21% of year 5 and 30% 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, 63%, or 12 out of 19 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5, and 67%, or 8 out of 12 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7.