

Department for Education

External School Review

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

Report for Munno Para Primary School

Conducted in September 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 Phil Garner, Review Officer of the department's Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate and Mark Vincent, 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

Munno Para Primary School caters for students from reception to year 7. It is situated 35kms from the Adelaide CBD. The enrolment in 2019 is 384 students. Enrolment at the time of the previous review was 320.

The school has an ICSEA score of 919 and is classified as Category 2 on the Department for Education Index of Educational Disadvantage.

The school population includes 16% Aboriginal students, 23% students with a verified disability, 10% students with English as an additional language or dialect (EALD) background, 15 children/young people in care and 65% of families eligible for School Card assistance.

The school leadership team consists of a principal in the 1st year of their 2nd tenure at the school. The school has 3 senior leaders: curriculum, wellbeing and special education.

Previous ESR or OTE directions were:

- Direction 1** Improve reading and numeracy achievement and retention in upper bands, across foundation to year 7, through the consistent implementation of agreed, effective and evidence-based pedagogical approaches.
- Direction 2** Challenge and engage all learners by supporting teachers to strategically collect, analyse and use the available data (school-wide and class-based) to collaboratively plan for their needs and to regularly monitor and track student learning progress over time.
- Direction 3** Clearly define a vision and strategic intent in collaboration with key stakeholders that impacts the work of teachers and leaders towards improved learning outcomes for every student.
- Direction 4** Implement a coherent whole-school approach to the teaching of numeracy through professional learning, collaborative planning, classroom observations and a performance and development structure that promotes improvement and accountability.

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

Direction 1: The school has implemented a systematic approach to improve achievement in literacy and numeracy. Whole-school agreements have been developed and embedded with consistent pedagogical approaches implemented. Student improvement in literacy and numeracy against the Department for Education Standard of Educational Achievement (SEA), and high band achievement is clearly evident across years 3 and 5. During the same period, there has been no improvement in year 7 achievement. Retention of students in the NAPLAN higher bands is apparent from years 3 to 5 but has decreased from years 5 to 7.

Direction 2: Staff have engaged effectively with the analysis of student data. Electronic data programs enable deep analysis and easy access to student achievement data. Student progress is tracked effectively and interventions implemented when required. Student data is discussed in learning teams and is a key driver in the design of learning.

Direction 3: The school is now galvanised with the single purpose of improving student learning outcomes. Procedures and processes have been streamlined and are providing staff with operational consistency and guidance in effective teaching and learning. Cohesive, collaborative and supportive learning teams enable teachers to develop common approaches and engage in professional learning.

Direction 4: A whole-school numeracy agreement has been developed that provides consistency across the school. The provision of fluency and problem solving learning tasks are evident in most classes, with opportunities for teachers to collaboratively plan being provided. Performance development processes have been implemented with opportunities for class observations available.

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 school has critically analysed student achievement data over time and identified several Challenges of Practice in literacy and numeracy that, when addressed will have a positive impact on improving student achievement. The Challenges of Practice focus explicitly on specific teaching and learning that will have the maximum effect on student improvement, however, the associated actions identified to achieve this, while related, are less specific and are not providing teachers with clear, concise links to develop them.

The school has a strong focus on professional learning that builds teacher capacity and engages students effectively in their learning. For example, the introduction of a dedicated program for writing. Teachers and students have identified this approach to be the catalyst for improving the quality of student writing and engagement. Staff performance development plans and whole-school professional learning reflects the Site Improvement Plan (SIP) actions and are focussed on creating consistency across the school.

Given the initial limited timeframe for implementation of the new SIP and self-review process, teacher and student consultation has been limited, thereby reducing the level of collective ownership. The recent staff review of the SIP has identified the need to provide opportunities to engage staff and students more effectively with the improvement planning process that will lead to greater ownership, commitment and accountability for its successful implementation.

Direction 1 Collaboratively review the SIP Challenges of Practice and associated actions to provide absolute clarity and a clear line of sight between goals and targets, teacher practice and students' learning.

EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND STUDENT LEARNING

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

Throughout the school the panel observed calm, quiet and well organised learning environments conducive to productive learning with students clearly engaged in their learning tasks.

The use of learning intentions is an embedded practice across the school with students able to articulate the what and why of their learning. Some year levels are using success criteria successfully to enable students to take responsibility for their own learning by helping them accurately evaluate their learning against shared expectations. However, this is not an embedded practice across the school. Although some staff are beginning to involve students in co-constructing the success criteria, it is still in the developing phase.

The panel evidenced the need to develop a common understanding of what constitutes effective success criteria and how to engage students effectively in this process.

There is evidence across the school that teachers are differentiating the learning for students using a gradual release model and varying the support provided to different students. The implementation of the Brightpath assessment tool is enabling teachers to identify the next steps in the writing process for effective differentiation. However, students have very few opportunities to engage with, or analyse their own assessment data, and rely on assessment scores to gauge whether or not they are improving. Students indicated that they would like to engage with their data to better understand their next steps in learning.

There were some pockets of effective formative feedback, however in a number of classes the panel observed many examples of unfinished and unassessed learning with errors in vocabulary and sentence structure clearly visible. Where the learning was assessed, it was mainly by affirmation, ticks or stamps and stickers.

Challenge in learning varies considerably from class to class with some teachers indicating that, at times, they are finding it difficult to provide challenging learning tasks for higher level students. This is reflected by students who rated their learning in literacy and numeracy as less than challenging.

Direction 2 To increase engagement and challenge in learning, provide opportunities for students to critically engage with and analyse their assessment data, set achievable learning goals and co-construct the success criteria.

Direction 3 To enhance student engagement in their own learning and improve student outcomes, collaboratively design and implement a consistent whole-school understanding and approach to effective formative feedback.

EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP

How well does the leadership facilitate the development of coherent high quality curriculum planning and effective teaching?

The introduction of the new Professional Learning Committee (PLC) structure introduced this year is having a positive effect on building teacher capacity. PLC planning documents direct the focus and learning for each team. The PLC leaders meet with the leadership, with meeting minutes informing staff of individual team initiatives and progress made towards the achievement of the goals. However, while all staff value the collaborative year level team approach to teaching and learning, they indicated that a greater understanding of what other year levels are engaging in, would assist in the development of a more cohesive, collaborative and consistent reception to year 7 approach to teaching and learning.

Teaching teams collaborate in the design of learning and analyse individual and student cohort achievement data effectively. Teachers have noticed a real shift in the consistency of practice across their year levels, with whole-school agreements being effectively implemented across the school.

The school has high expectations of compliance to agreed procedures and processes including the use of consistent learning design templates for literacy and numeracy, explicit termly planning overviews and literacy and numeracy agreements that are embedded and reviewed regularly. Staff Professional Development Program (PDP) plans are generally linked to the SIP with professional learning having a positive effect on building teacher capacity.

Peer observation occurs informally across the school. However, there is no formal process of providing feedback to teachers, including specialist teachers, about their performance in the classroom. Line managers observe the teachers once per year in relation to the PDP, however teachers do not rate this highly or of having any significant effect on improving their practice. All teachers indicated that they would like to be involved in a continuous formal process of observation and feedback throughout the school year.



Direction 4 **Improve student achievement and build teacher capacity through the development and implementation of a formal process of collaborative professional learning that provides explicit performance feedback and supports high quality teaching and learning.**

Outcomes of the External School Review 2019

The school has recently introduced a digital media course for year 5, 6 and 7 students promoting learning through increased ICT, literacy and critical and creative thinking skills. The program links closely with Australian Curriculum and the general capabilities. This initiative is providing students with the opportunity to develop a wide range of technical and social skills through collaboration, challenge and engagement.

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

- Direction 1** Collaboratively review the SIP Challenges of Practice and associated actions to provide absolute clarity and a clear line of sight between goals and targets, teacher practice and students' learning.
- Direction 2** To increase engagement and challenge in learning, provide opportunities for students to critically engage with and analyse their assessment data, set achievable learning goals and co-construct the success criteria.
- Direction 3** To enhance student engagement in their own learning and improve student outcomes, collaboratively design and implement a consistent whole-school understanding and approach to effective formative feedback.
- Direction 4** Improve student achievement and build teacher capacity through the development and implementation of a formal process of collaborative professional learning that provides explicit performance feedback and supports high quality teaching and learning.

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



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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, 36% of year 1 and 47% 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 2018, the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 64% of year 3 students, 66% of year 5 students and 45% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For years 3 and 5, this result represents an improvement, and for year 7 little or no change from the historic baseline average.

Between 2016 and 2018, the trend for year 5 has been upward from 40% to 66%.

For 2018 year 3 and 5 NAPLAN reading, the school is achieving within and for year 7, is achieving below the results of similar students across government schools.

In 2018, 31% of year 3, 28% of year 5 and 3% 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 2016 and 2018, the trend for year 3 and 5 has been upwards from 20% to 31% and 5% to 28%, respectively.

For those students in 2018 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in reading, 67%, or 4 out of 6 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5, and 0%, or 0 out of 5 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7.

Numeracy

In 2018, the numeracy results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 62% of year 3 students, 52% of year 5 students and 53% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For years 3, 5 and 7, this result represents an improvement from the historic baseline average.

Between 2016 and 2018, the trend for year 3 has been upwards from 53% to 62%.

For 2018 year 3 and 5 NAPLAN numeracy, the school is achieving within and for year 7, is achieving below the results of similar groups of students across government schools.

In 2018, 20% of year 3, 7% of year 5 and 0% 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 2016 and 2018, the trend for year 3 has been upwards from 7% to 20%, and downwards for year 7 from 11% to 0%.

For those students in 2018 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in numeracy, 50%, or 1 out of 2 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5, and 0%, or 0 out of 4 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7.