

EXTERNAL SCHOOL REVIEW

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools Division

ON-TRACK EVALUATION REPORT

Munno Para Primary School

One-Year Return Visit Conducted in June 2017



Government of South Australia

Department for Education and
Child Development

This On-Track Evaluation Report should be read in conjunction with the report of the External School Review conducted at Munno Para Primary School in November 2015.

ON-TRACK EVALUATION PROCESS

A priority for the Department for Education and Child Development (DECD) is to improve the educational attainment and wellbeing of South Australia's children and young people.

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 DECD schools. All DECD schools are externally reviewed over a four-year cycle. After the review the Principal and the Governing Council Chairperson receive a written report with a number of Directions for improvement.

A copy of the External School Review Report is available on the school website.

In some cases, when the Review Panel finds cause for concern about the levels of achievement and growth, together with evidence about the school's capacity for systematic improvement, a school will be advised that they will be visited again in one year.

Schools with a 'one-year return' are assisted during the intervening period by the Education Director and other DECD officers to ensure coordinated, targeted and systematic support is provided. Intervention is concentrated on building the school's capacity to improve teaching and learning across the school, lift expectations and achieve results as measured against the DECD Standard of Educational Achievement.

During the On-Track Evaluation process, which occurs 12-15 months after the initial visit, a Review Panel determines the extent to which the school has, with external support, developed sustainable internal capacity to improve effectiveness and raise student achievement.

The school's Priority Improvement Plan (PIP) was the main document used as the basis for the On-Track Evaluation visit.

The On-Track Evaluation visit was conducted by June 2017, Review Officer, Review, Improvement and Accountability Directorate and Lissa Hutter, Review Principal.

POLICY COMPLIANCE

The External School Review process included verification by the Principal that key Policies are implemented and adhered to.

The Principal has indicated that the non-compliant items reported in the External School Review in 2015 have been addressed.

DIRECTIONS FROM THE EXTERNAL SCHOOL REVIEW REPORT, November 2015

- 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.**
- 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.**
- 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.**
- 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.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION RELATED TO SCHOOL CONTEXT

The Principal has advised that, since the External School Review, Munno Para Primary School has experienced a rise in enrolment to approximately 350 students. The Leadership Team has remained relatively stable since the External School Review, and it has regularly monitored progress against the school's identified Priority Improvement Plan.

DEVELOPMENT OF A PRIORITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN (PIP)

The Principal has advised that Munno Para Primary School developed its Priority Improvement Plan and began implementation of the accompanying strategic actions in February 2016.

The Priority Improvement Plan was sent to the Executive Director, Partnerships, Schools and Preschools in Term 1 2016.

The Education Director and Principal met at ten-weekly intervals throughout 2016/17 to monitor the progress of this plan to ensure the school was 'on-track' and receiving timely support.

STRATEGIC SUPPORT PROVIDED TO THE SCHOOL OVER THE LAST TWELVE MONTHS:

Since the External School Review in November 2015, the Principal has worked with DECD officers to develop, implement and monitor the required Priority Improvement Plan (PIP). The Education Director, Principal, Principal Consultant and Learning Improvement Project Officer have used the PIP as the focus for regular (termly) discussions.

At the school level, teacher-leader meetings have been held regularly throughout 2016 and 2017 to progress the work identified in the PIP.

The Project Officer from DECD Learning Improvement has been an ongoing contributor to this work and has provided on-site professional learning and support to leaders and teachers for a number of identified strategies. The school has also engaged the support of the local Principal Consultant and other relevant staff from the local Partnership.

Leaders, teachers and relevant School Services Officer (SSO) staff were prepared for the OTE visit, and were able to corroborate evidence of achievements made and raised capacity for continued school improvement. This evidence was verified through documentation and Review Panel interviews with a range of key people in the school community.

EVIDENCE AND EVALUATION REFERENCED TO THE DIRECTIONS IN THE PRIORITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

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.	
ON-TRACK EVALUATION Evidence found of the school being on-track and building capacity to improve	REVIEW PANEL COMMENTS Extent to which actions have been / are being implemented effectively
<p>The staff were supported to observe Guided Reading in another Partnership school, which led to its implementation at Munno Para Primary School. This implementation was strategically introduced after the release of the PAT-R data in 2016. As a result, the Daily 5 and the Big 6 approaches to Reading have been established across the school.</p> <p>Staff verified that professional learning has been extensive with evident changes to teaching practices and strategies. These included: goal-setting, more explicitness in teaching, open questioning, stretch and challenge through the use of rubrics, more targeted teaching and more differentiation in classrooms.</p> <p>The school focused explicitly on the development of oral language across the early years of schooling through a focus on Phonological Awareness. Early Years teachers were trained in Oral Language Assessment by a speech pathologist engaged by the school.</p> <p>Literacy agreements were established and a deeper understanding of standards in reading and writing were developed. This work occurred through a sound change management process over time.</p> <p>A recent survey indicated students are enjoying maths more, and are feeling more positive about the subject. Students are applying strategies in homework and are confidently sharing their processes in front of the class.</p> <p>All students have reading goals established and documented in class. Exemplars of this approach were provided on request.</p>	<p>The focus on teacher professional learning has increased extensively since the ESR in November 2015. The staff commented on the importance of access to this training to support their development, but questioned the value of one-off training opportunities.</p> <p>Literacy and numeracy achievement is clearly established as the school's focus in its improvement plan. Evidence-based strategies have been established and agreed to and implemented by teachers across the school with in-built levels of accountability to each other.</p> <p>Strategies to promote higher-order thinking and engagement have been introduced, particularly in maths.</p> <p>The Review Panel heard comments from staff that indicated a need to now invest time in consolidating and embedding these strategies across the school.</p>

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.

ON-TRACK EVALUATION

Evidence found of the school being on-track and building capacity to improve

REVIEW PANEL COMMENTS

Extent to which actions have been / are being implemented effectively

Staff committed to considering alphabet, phonemic and PAT-R student data with the support of the Learning Improvement Project Officer. The data collected was analyzed in Professional Learning Teams within the school.

The staff were retrained in the accurate and timely collection of Running Records to monitor and support reading development through the Early Years of schooling. The school has invested in one staff member to be trained as a facilitator in the literacy area. Running Records are collected and monitored each term.

Staff have taken on greater responsibility and ownership for adjusting and monitoring the school data wall throughout the year, as well as a school database, to identify strengths and areas for improvement in student learning.

The Brightpath (writing) project commenced in 2017 to support moderation of writing assessment and to identify teaching points across the staff year level teams.

The Partnership SLLIP Project Officer has supported staff to analyse PAT-M data for the school and adjust some of their teaching practices, for example, asking more open questions of students.

The school has established a learner data management system and assessment folders to record and track student growth over time.

A focus on intervention for identified students has resulted in more structure in planning specific SMARTAR targets, parental involvement in the NEP process, allocation of appropriate support levels, access to other funding, for example, Resource Allocation Adjustment Panel (RAAP), and targeted SSO support in class and targeted programs, for example, MacQLit .

The use of data by staff at the school level has clearly influenced the direction and strategies used by the staff across the school.

At the school level, staff have identified, through the data, specific aspects that need to be strengthened. This has resulted in a more strategic and focused approach to teaching and learning.

The structures the school has established for data collection, storage, team discussions and planning have been important strategic steps in enabling this work to develop.

The data has enabled teachers to plan together to specifically address identified needs at the team level and across the school. This has the potential to go further in considering the individual needs of students.

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.

ON-TRACK EVALUATION

Evidence found of the school being on-track and building capacity to improve

REVIEW PANEL COMMENTS

Extent to which actions have been / are being implemented effectively

The Leadership Team developed clearly defined roles in leading school improvement and these are well-documented. Some staff commented that the Leadership Team is now more structured and consistent in its function,

The Principal, leadership and staff have been relentless in pursuing the improvement agenda established for the school since the External School Review

communication and expectations.

The Leadership Team and staff verified the unity of the school in taking collective action to improve against the identified goals established for the school.

The vision, values and purpose of the school were redefined following the ESR with staff and Governing Council. This was verified through conversations with teachers and the Governing Council Chairperson.

The improvement strategies, timelines and outcomes were clearly defined, monitored and reported through the school's Priority Improvement Plan.

A documented assessment plan for literacy and numeracy has been established across the school year.

An effective change process was used with staff, and the effective elements included time, resourcing, training, data, support, teamwork and documented agreements. One teacher commented: "The pace of change has been okay, because it has been supported and scaffolded. People are more focused".

About planning together in staff teams, a teacher commented: "I think it's fantastic".

Some teachers described the Principal's leadership as "Focused - with a real sense of urgency". One staff member commented: "I felt a bit overwhelmed". However, another commented: "Things settled down and people found their feet".

Staff reinforced that everyone is working together in a more unified way to deliver improvement at Munno Para Primary School.

Another comment from a teacher summed up the need for the momentum change at Munno Para Primary School: "We had to catch up, but there's light at the end of the tunnel".

The Governing Council Chairperson stated: "The changes are coming along nicely. The kids' needs are foremost".

The most powerful comment made by a teacher about the change process in recent times was: "I've moved further in 2 years than I have in 38".

at the end of 2015.

Expectations for improved learning for students, whole-school improvement and a culture of achieving success together have been well-established.

The Principal has demonstrated 'drive and focus' towards working strategically with others to raise expectations and outcomes for students at the school.

The Leadership Team presented as a united and collaborative group who have clear roles and responsibilities across the school. It was clear that the key messages from the Principal and members of the Leadership Team are aligned and consistent.

There was a united and positive school culture presented in meetings with leadership and staff.

During the site visit, the Review Panel noted a calm and orderly approach to teaching and learning in classrooms. The students spoke confidently about changes they had noticed in approaches used by teachers.

The school culture, supporting structures and practices have positively influenced the improvement focus of the school.

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.

ON-TRACK EVALUATION

Evidence found of the school being on-track and building capacity to improve

REVIEW PANEL COMMENTS

Extent to which actions have been / are being implemented effectively

The Leadership Team developed a line management structure with staff to ensure that the staff team has the support and challenge for improvement through a performance and development structure. The Review Panel sighted exemplars of Performance and Development (PD)

The expectation for improvement from the Principal and Leadership Team has flowed through the staff teams to the whole-school team. Some staff commented that they now feel

plans and written feedback to staff.

One teacher commented that it was the first time a member of a Leadership Team had provided her with feedback. Another stated: "My line manager provides me with feedback against the Teaching for Effective Learning Framework (TfEL)".

The school has established and maintained effective working relationships with schools within the Partnership to further the work in numeracy improvement. Programs of this collaborative work were sighted.

Staff have engaged in training on-site with a maths facilitator and with Partnership schools during pupil free days to promote problematised thinking in this subject.

The school has established specific times in the school timetable for teaching teams to meet and plan for maths teaching and learning in a collaborative way, following a two-week teaching cycle. These cycles were evident in rooms visited during the OTE.

Teaching staff confirmed that improved consistency and expectation across the school has resulted from the strong focus of the Leadership Team. One teacher commented: "I think we're definitely on the right path".

A whole-school agreement in numeracy was evident in documentation and interviews with staff. This approach across the school has provided staff with a sense of 'being on the same page'. One teacher commented: "People are happy with the whole-school agreements". Documented non-negotiable requirements were established for staff, inclusive of the use of structure, pedagogy, planning and evaluation.

connected to other schools as a result of their professional learning. This consistency of expectation and higher-level accountability across the staff has been influential in the school improvement journey.

Staff indicated that they had just begun to work as Professional Learning Communities and wanted to see this work connected across the school from Reception to Year 7.

The opening up of classrooms and the sharing between staff members through the school structures has worked to support change and improvement.

There is still work to do in staff teams to embed professional learning into established class practices, supported by observation and feedback. This was acknowledged by leadership and staff alike.

OUTCOMES OF THE ON-TRACK EVALUATION

Based on the evidence provided, Munno Para Primary School is On-Track to ensure effective implementation of the ESR Directions.

The Review Panel found that Munno Para Primary School has progressed markedly in its improvement and accountability processes through strategically addressing the Directions from the External School Review in 2015.

The Principal and the Leadership Team have worked in a determined manner to address the identified areas and have done so with strategic skill and resolve. The school culture has emerged into one of united determination to improve the outcomes for students despite some presenting challenges.

The Review Panel commends the Principal, Leadership Team and staff for their hard work, commitment and professional resolve to improve learning for the students in a strategic and unified way.


The Principal will continue to work with the Education Director to implement the findings of the ESR Report dated November 2015 and, in particular, the findings of the On-Track Evaluation process and a revised Priority Improvement Plan.

The Education Director will continue to ensure coordinated, targeted and systematic support is provided to the school for the next twelve months.

Based on current performance, Munno Para Primary School will be externally reviewed again in 2019.



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