

# Department for Education

## External School Review

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

### Report for Hincks Avenue 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 Tanya Oshinsky, Review Officer of the department's Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate and Shane Misso, Review Principal.

## Review Process

The following processes were used to gather evidence relating to the lines of inquiry:

- Presentation from the principal
- Class visits
- Staff meeting activity and observation of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)
- Document analysis
- Scan of Aboriginal Education Strategy implementation
- Discussions with:
  - Governing Council representatives
  - Leaders
  - Parent group
  - School Support Officers (SSOs)
  - Student groups
  - Teachers

## School context

Hincks Avenue Primary School caters for children from reception to year 7. It is situated 380kms from the Adelaide CBD. The enrolment in 2019 is 159 students. Enrolment at the time of the previous review was 180 students.

The school has an ICSEA score of 855 and is classified as Category 2 on the Department for Education Index of Educational Disadvantage.

The school population includes 45% Aboriginal students, 21% students with disabilities, 19% students with English as an additional language or dialect (EALD) background, 6 children/young people in care and 68% of families eligible for School Card assistance.

The school leadership team consists of a principal in the first year of their tenure. There is one Band 1 Literacy and Impact Coach Leader.

## Previous ESR or OTE directions were:

- Direction 1** Consistently implement agreements in literacy, numeracy and positive behaviour learning to ensure a consistent experience for students as they move through the school.
- Direction 2** Strengthen the culture of high expectations by documenting measurable learning outcomes and explicit expectations for achievement.
- Direction 3** Sharpen the impact of improvement planning on achievement by collaboratively undertaking regular self-review processes and consistently acting upon findings.
- Direction 4** Increase the number of students making expected or greater than expected progress by ensuring that the school has reliable and easily accessible data collection and analysis processes for staff to regularly monitor progress of individual students and cohorts throughout the year.

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

Hincks Avenue Primary School (HAPS) was externally reviewed in 2015, followed by an On-Track Evaluation (OTE) in 2017. Since the OTE, there have been several changes in leadership and staff. While the change of leaders has brought different foci and some uncertainty for the staff and wider community, it is evident that attention to the directions from the last review has continued, influencing the Site Improvement Plan (SIP) over time. The greatest changes have been in the analysis of data to inform site practice and exploring programs which were then implemented as a foundation of building consistency across the school, particularly in literacy and positive behaviour learning.

The panel observed strong evidence of Read, Write Inc. (RWI), Vocab Conjunctions Openers Punctuation (VCOP), Big Writes and Cold Writes, Visual Learning and Walker Learning in action. Aspects of the directions such as high expectations for students to be achieving higher levels of learning and self-review processes that regularly measure the impact of programs and actions, are continuing work for the school.

Consistency and coherence of whole-school agreed practices continues to be a challenge with changeover of staff and differing priorities. A recent shift from working in either an early year's team or a primary year's team to mixed reception to year 7 Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), will enable greater congruence of the improvement agenda across the school and further build staff cohesion.

Despite significant change in the past two years, the panel found all staff to be committed and dedicated professionals who continue to embrace school agreements.

## 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 current SIP was developed and implemented under the guidance of three principals over three terms. Staff are aware of the SIP, its contents and teachers were consulted to some degree during the process, while support staff and the governing council were informed of its components. Actions within the SIP are being enacted, although there is some misconception that the goals and Challenges of Practices are specifically the work of the year levels identified. Newly formed PLCs are aligned to the goals within the SIP and take place three times per term during staff meetings. Teacher leaders have been identified to facilitate the discussions within these reception to year 7 groups and action plans that outline the work, form the basis of discussions. Communicating and connecting the work that different staff undertake to progress these priority areas is yet to be refined.

Detailed documentation was evidenced by the panel of the principal's vision for building congruence of effective practices and whole school expectations in line with the SIP and other priorities. Although staff are aware of these documents, time unpacking each of these expectations and providing opportunity for staff dialogue and consultation will be vital for staff ownership and accountability. Communication and consultation are key to rebuilding a culture of trust and credibility at HAPS. Whole-school agreements that have been in place for some time were found to be at various depths of implementation and effectiveness across the school. Induction, which has been identified by all staff as an area for further development, will play a large role in the capacity of staff to implement expectations, moving forward.

In developing staff skills in the collecting and analysing of data, the panel noted that data walls are visual, agreed assessment tools are regularly implemented and modes of recording student achievement are in place, enabling teachers to effectively track student progress. Clarity between improvement and appropriate growth for every student should be the focus of discussion, to ensure gaps are reduced and students are being stretched in their learning. Regular self-review processes, that engage all staff, need to be established as common practice at HAPS to guarantee all programs and actions are having the desired impact for improvement.

**Direction 1**      **Ensure appropriate growth in student outcomes by developing and implementing self-review processes inclusive of all staff that continuously monitor and evaluate, consistent implementation (reception to year 7) and impact of programs and strategies.**

### EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND STUDENT LEARNING

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

Examples of formative and summative assessment practices were provided to the panel. Teachers referred to new assessment tools through Brightpath and Essential Maths as their key implements of formative assessment. Strategies such as questioning, checking for understanding and providing feedback, that move learning forward during tasks and support students to continuously strive to improve their outcomes before completing the task, could be further developed and should be part of everyday learning.

One strength of the school is evidenced through the school's Visible Learning journey and the use of 'Big Write', where there has been conscious attention to building students' skills in self-assessing their work and setting explicit learning goals. Using the Vocabulary, Connectives, Openers and Punctuation (VCOP) checklists, students are able to clearly identify elements of writing in which they need further practice. The fortnightly cycle of Big Write ensures regular monitoring and review of goals that are owned by students, especially those in the primary years. This is an excellent foundation to foster transferrable skills and further build student agency into all areas of learning.

The focus on Visible Learning also promotes the use of Learning Intentions, Success Criteria and providing constructive feedback to students as further scaffolds for them to be independent learners who monitor and improve their own outcomes. The panel found each of these strategies being implemented across most classrooms but with varying degrees. It is essential that constant review and monitoring of agreements, including identifying required support for teachers, to ensure that the integrity of effective practices is maintained.

While attention to individual student data has improved over time, differentiating and designing rich tasks through knowledge of student achievement was not clear as teachers are focussed on the delivery of programs. It is timely to revisit Learning Design, Assessment and Moderation (LDAM) strategy practices, teachers stated during the review that previous moderation practices had been of benefit. In connecting rich learning design and assessment, moderation not only evaluates consistency in grading but also whether the task provides students with the opportunity to demonstrate higher levels of learning. This is essential in building teacher capacity to design learning that continuously stretches students.

**Direction 2     Build and consolidate teachers' capacity to consistently deliver whole-school agreements and to design and implement rich learning experiences, which further enable differentiation, intellectual stretch and challenge, to be an integral aspect of everyday learning for all students.**

## **CONDITIONS FOR EFFECTIVE STUDENT LEARNING**

***To what extent are all students, including Aboriginal students and other priority groups, achieving growth in their learning?***

Extra curriculum time is dedicated to literacy at HAPS. A literacy block occurs across the school five mornings per week and students are streamed from all year levels into ability groups across the school for RWI and Language and Literacy activities. As RWI recommends, one member of staff assesses all of the students and an 8 week review cycle enables students to move between groups as their skills develop. A significant amount of resourcing facilitates smaller groups for these sessions with support from a School Support Officer (SSO) in all classrooms at other times of the day. Catering for the varied needs of students is perceived as being accommodated for through these structures. Given the significant resourcing, it is essential that yet to be developed self-review processes ensure the desired impact on distance travelled in achievement for all students is met.

A high proportion of students, including Aboriginal students and students with disabilities, have One Child One Plans (OCOPs) that identify individual learning goals for them. Parents are consulted in the development of plans and are kept informed through usual reporting processes about their child's progress. Outside of OCOPs and streaming in literacy, evidence of differentiated planning for these students to more effectively access the curriculum was limited. Data identifies that there are many students at HAPS that are 'at risk' and that their rate of growth in learning is being impacted over time. Prioritising evidence-based strategies to support these students to further improve and having high expectations for all students to exceed their current rate of learning, should be the moral purpose of all stakeholders.

Data walls and class data checklists map students against benchmarks. Formal conversations about student achievement occurs in staff meetings, through performance meetings and when interrogating summative data such as NAPLAN. Writing and maths assessments also inform teachers and students of next steps in learning. Deeper analysis of data at an individual level to set targets for students who are not achieving the required growth, and attention to how well teachers are planning and designing learning for the varied needs and learning styles of learners, are essential elements in gaining understanding of the next steps required for site improvement.

**Direction 3**    **Ensure appropriate learning progress for all students, in particular Aboriginal students and other priority groups, by having high expectations, tracking the growth of every student’s achievement and designing learning tasks that stretch and challenge the learning for the varied needs of learners.**

# Outcomes of the External School Review 2019

Clear structures are currently being developed to align the school's site priorities with learning teams and performance development processes. Key staff take responsibility to lead identified areas for improvement. Further actions for improvement have been clearly identified and partnership work also influences the improvement agenda. Staff have supported one another through phases of change and continue to be dedicated professionals who are committed to improving the teaching and learning for their students.

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

- Direction 1**    Ensure appropriate growth in student outcomes by developing and implementing self-review processes inclusive of all staff that continuously monitor and evaluate, consistent implementation (reception to year 7) and impact of programs and strategies.
- Direction 2**    Build and consolidate teachers' capacity to consistently deliver whole-school agreements and to design and implement rich learning experiences, which further enable differentiation, intellectual stretch and challenge, to be an integral aspect of everyday learning for all students.
- Direction 3**    Ensure appropriate learning progress for all students, in particular Aboriginal students and other priority groups, by having high expectations, tracking the growth of every student's achievement and designing learning tasks that stretch and challenge the learning for the varied needs of learners.

Based on the school's current performance, Hincks Avenue 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

-----  
Melissa Gloede  
PRINCIPAL  
HINCKS AVENUE 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, 40% of year 1 and 29% of year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. This result represents little or no change from the historic baseline average for year 1, and a decline for year 2.

In 2018, the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 47% of year 3 students, 39% of year 5 students and 46% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For years 3, 5 and 7, this result represents little or no change from the historic baseline average.

Between 2016 and 2018, the trend for year 3 has been downwards, from 61% to 47%.

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

In 2018, 21% of year 3, 8% of year 5 and 0% 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 2018 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in reading, 100%, or 1 out of 1 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5 and 0%, or 0 out of 1 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7.

### Numeracy

In 2018, the numeracy results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 50% of year 3 students, 62% of year 5 students and 46% 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, this represents little or no change from the historic baseline average.

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

In 2018, 15% of year 3, 0% 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.

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