

DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
OFFICE FOR EDUCATION AND EARLY CHILDHOOD

EXTERNAL SCHOOL REVIEW

REPORT FOR CRAIGBURN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Conducted in AUGUST 2016



**Government
of South Australia**

Department for Education
and Child Development

Review details

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 is to support schools to raise achievement, sustain high performance and to provide quality assurance to build and sustain public confidence in DECD schools.

The framework underpinning the External School Review identifies the key levers for school improvement and has been shaped and informed by research.

The overarching review question is "How well does this school improve student achievement, growth, challenge, engagement and equity?"

This Report of the External School Review 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.

The support and cooperation provided by the staff and school community is acknowledged. While not all review processes, artefacts and comments are documented, they all have been considered and contributed to the development and directions of this Report.

This External School Review was conducted by Julie Bishop, Review Officer, Review, Improvement and Accountability, and Sharron Ward and Cam Wright, Review Principals.

Policy compliance

The External School Review process includes verification by the Principal that key DECD policies are adhered to and implemented.

The Principal of Craighburn Primary School has verified that the school is compliant in all applicable DECD policies.

Implementation of the *DECD Student Attendance Policy* was checked specifically against documented evidence. The school was found to be compliant with this policy. The school attendance rate for 2015 was 93.8%, which is above the DECD target of 93%.

School context

Craighburn Primary School caters for children from Reception to Year 7. It is situated approximately 20kms from the Adelaide CBD and is part of the South Valley Precinct Partnership. The enrolment is 535 students. The school is classified as Category 7 on the DECD Index of Educational Disadvantage. The school's ICSEA score is 1074.

The school population includes 5 Aboriginal students, 29 students with disabilities, 12 students with English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EALD) background, 5 children in care, and 6% of families are eligible for School Card assistance.

The school Leadership Team consists of a Principal in the 4th year of her tenure at the school (currently on leave), and 2 Senior Leaders. There are 24 teachers, including 3 in the early years of their career.

School Performance Overview

The External School Review process includes an analysis of school performance as measured against the DECD Standard of Educational Achievement (SEA).

Reading

In the early years, reading progress is monitored against Running Records. In 2015, 44% of Year 1 and 80% of Year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement under the DECD Standard of Educational Achievement (SEA). This result represents a decline from the historic baseline average at Year 1, and little to no improvement against the historic average at Year 2. Between 2013 and 2015, there has been a downward trend for Year 1, from 78% in 2013 to 44% in 2015.

In 2015, the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 86% of Year 3 students, 82% of Year 5 students and 80% of Year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement under the DECD SEA. At all year levels, this represents a decline from the historic baseline average.

For 2015 Year 3, 5 and 7 NAPLAN Reading, the school is achieving within the results of similar students across DECD schools. There is a decline in Year 7 reading, from 94% in 2013 to 80% in 2015.

In 2015, 56% of Year 3, 38% of Year 5 and 15% of Year 7 students achieved in the top two NAPLAN Reading bands. For Year 5, this result represents a 3-year upward trend, and for Year 7, this represents a 3-year downward trend from 2013 to 2015.

For those students who achieved in the top two NAPLAN proficiency bands in reading, 54% (14 of 26) of Year 3 students remained in the upper bands at Year 5, and 39% (5 of 13) of Year 3 students remained in the upper bands at Year 7 in 2015. The result represents a decline from the historic average for Years 5 to 7, and little or no improvement for Years 3 to 5.

Numeracy

In 2015, the numeracy results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 83% of Year 3 students, 86% of Year 5 students, and 80% of Year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement under the DECD SEA. This result represents a decline against the historic baseline average for Years 3 and 7, and little to no improvement for Year 5.

For 2015 Year 3 and 7 NAPLAN Numeracy, the school achieved within the results of similar groups of students, and the Year 5 results were above the results of similar groups of students across DECD schools.

In 2015, 35% of Year 3 students, 24% of Year 5 students and 15% of Year 7 students achieved in the top two NAPLAN numeracy bands. For Year 7, this result represents a decline from 36% in 2013 to 15% in 2015. For Years 3 and 5, this represents little to no change from the historic baseline average.

For those students who achieved in the top two NAPLAN proficiency bands in numeracy, 64% (7 of 11) of students from Year 3, remained in the upper bands at Year 5. From Years 3 to 7, 67% (4 of 6) of students remained in the upper bands. These results represent an improvement from the historic baseline average.

Lines of Inquiry

During the review process, the panel focused on four key areas from the External School Review Framework:

Improvement Agenda:	How effective are the school's self-review processes in informing and shaping improvement?
Effective Teaching:	How effectively are teachers supporting students in their learning, particularly in providing feedback for improvement?
Student Learning:	How well are students achieving over time, particularly the extent of intellectual challenge?
Effective Leadership:	To what extent are the school's professional learning and performance and development processes effective in building teacher capacity?

How effective are the school's self-review processes in forming and shaping improvement?

The school updated its SIP in February 2016. The focus for 2016 is to use the Literacy and Numeracy Plus objectives (for example, track and monitor each child's growth, develop a cycle of improvement, develop powerful learners and interventions) as the main drivers for their work. The specific focus was to improve reading, writing and numeracy. These priorities were determined as a result of the analysis of 2015 PAT-R/-M, and NAPLAN results. The SIP outlines the need for Professional Learning Teams (PLTs) to use data, determine needs, set targets and review their improvement cycle four times a year against the Literacy and Numeracy agreements that have been developed.

Leadership stated that there has been considerable staff turnover over the past few years, and there was a need to rethink the way former PLTs had operated. A Professional Learning Communities (PLC) consultant worked with staff in 2012 to provide an independent review of PLC processes and structures. The feedback from the review was to consider the formation of a 'guiding coalition' being key members of each Professional Learning Team to work closely with the Leadership Team and to guide future planning and support for PLTs, also with a focus on Reception to Year 7 continuity.

Teachers now work in smaller PLTs determined by year-level, with one PLT comprised of specialist teachers. A representative of each team meets with the lead PLT Team every two weeks to maintain ongoing communication and to drive the whole-school learning cycle. Release time is provided for the PLT

Lead Team to meet once per fortnight and for half-day releases to work on PLT-related work.

Teachers have responded very positively to the restructure of PLTs. They indicated (via a survey provided during the ESR) the following implications for their work: familiarity with literacy and numeracy agreements, a wave model of intervention, an increased focus on differentiation, including the need to collect data to inform instruction, and a need to focus on improved expectations for all students.

Staff also indicated their support for the restructured timetable, which allows for some uninterrupted literacy sessions across year-level groups, and the opportunity to work with others to 'develop a guaranteed, viable curriculum with clear learning goals'.

Leadership have surveyed the staff via two different perception surveys, one with the focus on the structure of the PLT meeting protocols and their effectiveness, and the second on learning goals, assessment and pedagogy. Seventeen of 20 possible responses were received from the survey relating to meeting protocols. Eighty-two percent reported that they had a strong sense of attachment to their team, 77% indicated that they had improved as classroom teachers as a result of the work undertaken as a team, 77% indicated that tasks are determined by consensus among team members, and 35% indicated on the highest scale that tasks related directly to student learning goals, with 40% indicating that their team had worked hard to define the most important student learning goals.

The second survey based on learning goals received 15 of 20 possible responses. Responses relating to assessment and pedagogy indicated the following: 73% stated that, as an individual teacher, they regularly think about how specific pedagogies affect student learning; 67% implemented specific interventions in-class for struggling students; 67% stated that they adjust instructional practices in their classroom based on student performance on common assessments; and 60% responded that their team administers common assessments at least monthly.

The school is to be commended for the initiatives that have been implemented in the new SIP cycle, and for the focused structures that support an effective, ongoing self-review focus across the school. It is imperative that the establishment of communication processes within and across teams be developed if the momentum of the change agenda is to be realised and maintained over time.

During meetings with class teachers, it became apparent that collection and analysis of common datasets by year-level was not consistent across all PLTs, and that there was also little opportunity for PLTs to work with each other and share data. Common agreements within and across PLTs are necessary for consistency and congruence across the school.

At present, PLTs are working within year-level groups. This will not bring about whole-school long-term change without deliberate strategies that will allow for PLTs to regularly work with each other, and develop consistent agreements and aspirational targets.

In line with modern PLT thinking, PLTs need to work as year-level teams, as this involves setting clear learning goals, developing common formative assessments, differentiating learning tasks, building on intervention practices, monitoring and tracking student learning. Previous larger PLTs didn't allow for this. The PLT Lead Team and whole-school staff meetings provide the medium to shape and develop consistent agreements on assessments and aspirational targets within each year level.

The datasets that result from this agreement can then be managed by class teachers and viewed via a common data system, thereby strengthening the ownership of data to inform instruction.

Direction 1

Strengthen the work of PLTs through existing structures and processes by including opportunities for vertical alignment and connections.

How effectively are teachers supporting students in their learning, particularly in providing feedback for their improvement?

The staff are hard-working with a very strong commitment to improving practice. The restructuring of the PLTs has strongly supported the implementation of the school's improvement agenda. Staff have been very supportive of the digital literacy initiatives, and have developed effective processes for integrating the use of the BYO iPad program into classroom learning.

The school, through the SIP process, identified the setting of SMART goals as a priority, with the overall SMART goal being to improve comprehension with a specific focus on inference.

Approximately 66 students from Years 2 to 7 were interviewed by the Review Panel, along with informal conversations with Reception and Year 1 students. The panel asked students about grades received in the recent reports, why they thought they had received those particular grades and what they needed to do to improve their grade for a subject of their choice. Very few students could indicate a reason why they may have received a specific grade and provided responses that overwhelmingly related to effort and behaviour. Very few responses included reference to specific strategies. Several students reported that they had tried harder and that they did not really know what prevented them from improving. Some students stated: "I'm not good at that subject".

A group of Year 2/3 students discussing learning goals indicated that their goals were to read harder novels. They were unable to articulate what they would need to do to achieve this other than read harder and thicker books. Several students indicated that they wanted to write more detailed narratives. When asked how they may go about this, a response included: "neaten-up my handwriting and write stories from my head faster". Students from Years 5 and 6 reported that to improve their grades they would need to listen more and write more, try harder and practice at home.

Students in Years 6 and 7 could articulate their personal learning goals and stated that they wrote 3 SMART goals each term, but this was not consistently evident in other year levels. One Middle Years student indicated that he wanted to get into the extension maths group so he deliberately set out to see if he could improve his work and stated: "I thought I could and now I have got in".

Student goal-setting, continuous review and feedback about their learning are powerful tools in supporting students to improve. Goal-setting, however, may have little impact, if it is at a surface level, mainly behaviourally orientated, and not regularly reviewed. When teacher feedback is linked to goal-setting, students are drawn to think about the effectiveness of the strategies they use to achieve their learning tasks. John Hattie's research indicates that feedback has an effect size of 0.75 and is ranked in the top 20 strategies to improve learning. There are many opportunities where this can occur in a systemic way across all areas of the curriculum, and at all year levels. Research also indicates that students who set their own learning goals tend to be more motivated to achieve than when working on goals set for them by the teacher.

Direction 2

Support students to know how to improve by creating opportunities to engage in goal-setting, develop strategies to achieve the goals, and receive timely and detailed feedback in an ongoing cycle of review and improvement.

How well are students achieving over time, particularly the extent of intellectual challenge?

The Running Record data for Years 1 and 2 indicates a 3-year downward trend, and a decline against the historic baseline average. Staff reported that there has been considerable staff turnover at these year levels over the past few years. The Year 3 and 7 NAPLAN reading and numeracy data also indicates a 3-year downward trend. A decline against the historic average is present in Years 3, 5 and 7 NAPLAN Reading data, and in the Year 3 and 7 NAPLAN Numeracy data. The school, however, is still operating within the expected parameters of students with similar characteristics.

The staff, when presented with this data, indicated (via a survey run by the Review Panel during the ESR) their strong commitment to continuous improvement, and the need to focus on providing rigorous learning opportunities for students, as well as further professional learning in literacy and numeracy.

Seventeen of 24 responses indicated the need to revisit current practices in literacy and numeracy. Suggestions included being familiar with the Australian Curriculum and looking for ways to engage in it meaningfully, to place more focus on data to inform teaching, to work in teams, look at results, identify gaps across cohorts, and work together to ensure each child reaches their potential.

The school does provide a range of opportunities for students to engage in intellectually challenging opportunities, including an extension maths group in the Year 6/7 block. One student was reluctant to attend the External Review meeting with his peers, because it meant he would miss out on maths extension time. Other staff offer a range of opportunities to intellectually challenge students, some of which include: Genius Hour, Make It Time and a Coding Club, which is run at lunch times by members of the Digital Leaders Committee.

The school has an embedded culture of Inquiry Based Learning that is evident in all classes across the school; this is further enhanced by the visible mapping of a scope and sequence by topic for all year levels in the staff room. Further work on the alignment of some units against the Australian Curriculum would support the implementation of a cohesive curriculum within and across year levels.

Students from all year levels indicated that Inquiry Based Learning was their favourite; they consistently cited that they liked it because it made them think, it was challenging, interesting, they could experiment and set their own challenge.

The school is to be commended for the work they have begun in providing opportunities for students to demonstrate their intellectual potential in a range of different contexts, and for their commitment to improve the current downward trend, as evidenced in NAPLAN data. The next body of work is for intellectual challenge to become embedded practice across all learning areas and at all year levels; work in the PLTs on transforming tasks will support the attainment of this goal. The development of a scope and sequence aligned against the Australian Curriculum and assessed against the Achievement Standards will further enhance opportunities for students to demonstrate their capacity to consistently achieve their potential.

Direction 3

Increase intellectual stretch for all students by supporting teachers to collaboratively design rigorous learning tasks and use different assessment tools, which require students to apply their understanding and skills to new contexts, and are aligned with the Australian Curriculum and assessed via the Achievement Standards.

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

The school, through the Leadership Team, is to be commended for their commitment to providing access to professional learning of a very high calibre.

Over the past few years, the school has provided multiple opportunities for staff to participate in a diverse range of professional learning, including the work of Mazarno on the Art and Science of teaching, as part of the Partnership, visiting schools in Queensland, and working with specialists on feedback over an extended period of time. Extensive work with two different maths specialists, including Natural Maths, has been provided. Access, support, resourcing and promotion in the latest eLearning initiatives has been made available to staff. The staff turnover rate of the past three years has left the school in a rebuilding stage, with the understanding that many of the new staff have not had access to prior professional learning.

The school plans to further support staff through additional training for a member of each PLT as an instructional coach, with the aim of developing reflective practitioners, and developing stronger pedagogical approaches across the school.

Part of the leadership strategy has been to build teacher capacity by encouraging and supporting staff to develop personal learning networks and to engage in professional learning using social media tools, such as Twitter, Facebook and Blogs. This has enabled teachers to connect and engage with other educators within a global learning context.

The school will benefit from developing a strategic approach to professional learning. Forty-eight percent of staff indicated the need to focus on literacy and numeracy, via a survey issued during the External Review. For this to be effective, any professional learning will need to include the development of congruence relating to valued assessments by year-level, combined with agreements on aspirational targets. Subsequent data collection, input and data analysis processes by class teachers will ensure ownership of data to inform instruction and provide ongoing, strategic directions for continued growth.

The site priorities will directly link the SIP with professional learning; the structure of the PLTs would be a useful avenue within which these actions and discussions could occur.

The building of teacher capacity could be partially addressed by identifying mentor teachers to work with staff new to the school, who have not accessed the valued prior learning, in a manner similar to the very successful Digital Leaders Committee implemented at the beginning of 2014.

Leadership stated that Performance Development was largely teacher-driven, and took the form of an ongoing learning conversation. It was stated that staff were beginning to value critical feedback. It was indicated by leadership that further development of their Professional Development Processes was an area they were looking to improve.

The linking of SIP priorities with focused professional learning, which is reviewed through planned Performance Development processes, will provide teachers and leaders with a strategic and focused approach to implement and review their improvement agenda, and build teacher capacity in a systemic manner.

Direction 4

Increase teacher capacity to improve student learning outcomes through the alignment and strategic linking of the Site Improvement Plan with Professional Learning, validated by Performance Development processes.

OUTCOMES OF EXTERNAL SCHOOL REVIEW 2016

At Craighburn Primary School teachers are provided with and use structured time for ongoing collaborative professional learning. The school is to be commended for the way it works in partnership with parents and stakeholders.

The Principal will work with the Education Director to implement the following Directions:

1. Strengthen the work of PLTs through existing structures and processes by including opportunities for vertical alignment and connections.
2. Support students to know how to improve by creating opportunities to engage in goal-setting, develop strategies to achieve the goals, and receive timely and detailed feedback in an ongoing cycle of review and improvement.
3. Increase intellectual stretch for all students by supporting teachers to collaboratively design rigorous learning tasks and assessment rubrics, which require students to apply their understanding and skills to new contexts, and are aligned with the Australian Curriculum and assessed via the Achievement Standards.
4. Increase teacher capacity to improve student learning outcomes through the alignment and strategic linking of the Site Improvement Plan with Professional Learning, validated by Performance Development processes.

Based on the school's current performance, Craighburn Primary School will be externally reviewed again in 2020.



Tony Lunniss
DIRECTOR
REVIEW, IMPROVEMENT AND
ACCOUNTABILITY



Jayne Johnston
CHIEF EDUCATION OFFICER

The school will provide an implementation plan to the Education Director and community within three months of receipt of this report. Progress towards implementing the plan will be reported in the school's Annual Report.



Paul Luke
PRINCIPAL
CRAIGBURN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Governing Council Chairperson