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

This External School Review has evaluated:
  • the school's self review processes and findings,
  • the school's achievement data and progress over time,
  • the outcomes of the meetings and interviews with representatives from the school, and
  • parent and student views about the school.

The External School Review included an analysis of the school's key policies and procedures.

The support and cooperation provided by the staff and school community is acknowledged.

This External School Review was conducted by Liz Matheson, Review Officer, Review, Improvement and Accountability and Linda Olfent, Review Principal.
Policy compliance

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

The Principal of North Ingle School has verified that the school is working towards being compliant in all applicable DECD policies. The Principal advised actions are being taken to ensure compliance of the following policies:

- Monitor the site bullying data at least twice a year. Reporting to Governing Council will commence.p as of Term 2, 2015.
- School Discipline Policy. The current Student Behaviour Policy is under review and will be renamed and targeted as a priority in the School Improvement Plan 2015.
- A site induction policy will be developed.
- The Cyber Safety Policy will be reviewed in 2015.
- The school’s record management procedures are being reviewed to ensure they align with DECD Guidelines.
- Camps and Excursions policy. This policy will be reviewed in 2015.

Implementation of the DECD Student Attendance Policy was specifically checked against a documented set of criteria. The school has implemented comprehensive tracking and intervention processes, and was found to be compliant with this policy. The school has identified attendance as a key school priority and has included it on the School Improvement Plan (SiP). The Governing Council and staff are committed to improving attendance.

The school has implemented comprehensive tracking and intervention procedures and was found to be compliant with this policy. In 2014, the school reported attendance of 90.0%, which is below the DECD target of 93%.

School context

North Ingle School is located in the north east of Adelaide. Currently, there are 139 students enrolled at the school and enrolments are increasing. The school has an onsite preschool. The school has an ICSEA score of 945, and is classified as Category 3 on the DECD Index of Educational Disadvantage.

The school population includes 13 Aboriginal students and 19 (14%) students with English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EALD) background.

The school leadership team consists of the Principal in her third year of her first tenure and a newly appointed Deputy Principal. There are three teachers currently on contract and four permanently employed teachers at the school.
Lines of inquiry

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

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<td>How is the school monitoring progress and how effective are the school’s intervention strategies in supporting the students not currently meeting the DECD Standard of Educational Achievement (SEA)?</td>
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How well are students achieving over time?

The number of students demonstrating the DECD Standard of Educational Achievement (SEA) in Running Records increased in Year 2. However, nearly 50% of students are still not meeting the SEA as measured in September 2014. Additionally, eight out of twenty Year 3 students did not achieve the SEA and the majority of students in this cohort were assessed in the Australian Curriculum Standards as satisfactory or lower in reading. For this reason, the Review Panel investigated how the school monitors progress and the effectiveness of the intervention.

In the pre-review discussion, the increased number of students demonstrating the SEA in reading in Years 5 and Year 7 was highlighted as a strength. The data reveals twelve out of fourteen Year 5 students and six out of seven Year 7 students achieved the SEA.

The greatest limitation identified during the review process, was the pattern of low growth in reading from Year 3 to Year 5. Over three testing periods, the low growth has hovered between 43% and 45%. The pattern of high growth varies from 0% to 14%. As part of the comparison, the expected low and high growth across South Australia is 25%. Many of these students were assessed at the school as independent readers, but showed significantly low growth. This pattern is reversed in the Year 5 to Year 7 cohort over the same period of time, with 33% of high growth from 2012 to 2014.

Achievement in numeracy is lower than in reading. The school is aware of this and has made improvement in maths and numeracy a priority.

The Review Panel explored what pedagogies teachers were using to extend and stretch students.

How is the school monitoring progress and how effective are the school’s intervention strategies in supporting the students not currently meeting the DECD Standard of Educational Achievement (SEA)?

The school has developed a culture of improvement and learning. All stakeholders, including members of the Governing Council, described themselves as learners. There is a strong partnership between the school, the parents and the broader community, evidenced by an active and committed group of volunteers and Governing Council members. The focus of all the stakeholders is on the attendance and academic progress of each individual child.

Recent changes in the way the school supports student learning started with the use of achievement data as the main driver. Teachers acknowledged that this has had the greatest impact on their planning and practice. There is an agreed assessment data collection system. Teachers use their analysis of data sets to plan and target their instruction, to support individual student needs. The Principal’s participation in the ‘Principals as Literacy Leaders’ course supported the direction of literacy learning and improvement in the school. For some teachers, this has meant the adoption of a synthetic approach to teaching phonics and greater intentional development in oral language and phonological awareness.
Language and speech support is provided by a trained School Services Officer (SSO) who works closely with the Support Services Speech Pathologist. The communication between the class teacher, the SSO and the service providers ensures that intervention support is well coordinated. As the preschool is onsite, there is an active connection between the learning focus in the school and preschool. The transition of students into the school setting, including children with verified special needs, ensures continuity in the intervention programs and learning.

Literacy learning is supported within the classroom context by a dedicated SSO. The Deputy Principal provides targeted intervention to individual or small groups of students, on a withdrawal basis and within the classroom, depending on the activity. Decisions about whether students continue to have intensive intervention are made after the review of each student’s progress each term. There are ongoing reflective discussions between the class teacher and Deputy Principal, to determine if the current arrangements are having the desired impact and consequent modifications are implemented.

The school has recently adopted Quicksmart as an intervention program, to support identified students to develop automaticity in number. The program is conducted by two trained SSOs and early indicators are showing a positive effect.

The school’s use of data to inform priorities and planning extends to valuing and acting on perceptions of stakeholders. In 2013, perception data obtained from parents and students, indicated behaviour management was their biggest concern. As a result, the school, with the support of the Governing Council, has agreed to review its behaviour management policy and practices.

The use of attendance and achievement data to identify students, target the focus of intervention support, and to track progress, has now become an integral process at the school.

**Direction 1**
Regularly track student achievement progress and review and modify intervention strategies.
Ensure actions are targeted and effective in supporting students not achieving the DECD Standard of Educational Achievement.

**To what extent do teachers’ pedagogies support students to be intellectually stretched?**

The school is organised and operates in a way that impacts positively on teaching pedagogies. The leadership of the school has ensured there is a focus on personalised learning, informed by assessment and data. The focus over the past two years has been to build the capacity of teachers, with the aim of enacting whole school cohesive approaches that support literacy, particularly in reading. The management of change has been strategic, well-scaffolded and well-paced. There is clear direction and leadership. The Site Implementation Plan (SIP) priorities and strategies have been developed from an analysis of data, including perception data.

By the time students at the school are in Year 4, most are assessed as independent readers and are demonstrating achievement in the SEA, as measured by NAPLAN and Australian Curriculum Achievement Standards in English and Maths. The greatest challenge is the low growth, particularly from Year 3 to Year 5. In discussion with students, it was not evident what instruction was being provided to students who were assessed as independent readers. They appeared unaware of different text types, and what comprehension strategy they were learning or needed to practise. This response contrasted with other groups of students, who were very clear on the skills they were learning and how their teacher supported them. The Review Panel concluded that more systematic instruction to extend their skills and text knowledge is urgently required for students in this cohort.

**Direction 2**
Improve the growth of student achievement in Years 3 to Year 5 by differentiating the curriculum and providing explicit instruction to support the assessed needs of students.

In contrast, the growth in reading from Year 5 to Year 7 has been above the expected South Australian average for several years. An ongoing challenge for the school is to support more students to achieve in the higher proficiency bands.
The expectation that all students will gain the benefit of guided reading as a key instructional strategy is documented and is being implemented to varying degrees of effectiveness. Most students were able to describe their daily structures and routines. They explained how teachers intentionally developed their vocabulary, used chunking as a strategy, gave examples to illustrate concepts and provided planning scaffolds in genre writing. As many students are now independent readers, teachers will need to agree on a way of regularly monitoring progress to ensure students are engaging with a range of text genres and developing higher level comprehension.

The implementation for every student in the school to have explicit reading goals, which include the key strategy they need to use to improve, has been a positive step. Parents stated that it has provided them with specific advice about how to support their children. Students were able to describe their goals, and what they had to do to ‘get there.’ Teachers stated that goal setting helped them to have a more targeted instructional focus. One teacher said it required her to understand each child’s next learning step and the relevant knowledge of the curriculum. The process of target setting at the three-way interview in Term 1 had strengthened the partnership approach to student improvement. The success of this strategy could be extended. Teachers need to ensure they design tasks to enable students to demonstrate higher order thinking and to produce quality work. Students need to know what quality work looks like. Worked examples demonstrate to students, what “success” looks like and thus what the goal could be for their own learning. They can also be used for comparison and analysis after the discussion and formulation of success criteria.

Staff members are currently engaging in professional development to develop their pedagogical skills, to effectively support, extend and engage students in learning maths. Teachers report they have a good understanding of the mathematics strands in the Australian Curriculum. They plan to develop and document an agreed whole school approach. The benefit of a whole school approach is consistency in the language and assessment practices used by teachers and the continuity in learning from one year level to another. The Review Panel suggested that the school consider how they will monitor the implementation of agreements, so they can be confident they have a positive impact on student achievement. Success in achieving this process in mathematics will provide an excellent basis for implementing the Australian Curriculum more broadly.

**Direction 3**
Increase the proportion of students in higher proficiency bands by ensuring students understand success criteria and quality work.
Consolidate the target setting processes to support students to improve their current levels of achievement.
OUTCOMES OF EXTERNAL SCHOOL REVIEW 2015

North Ingle School is tracking well. Good performance was evident by a strong student improvement focused school-community partnership, increasingly informed by the strategic use of attendance and achievement data.

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

1. Regularly track student achievement progress and review and modify intervention strategies. Ensure actions are targeted and effective in supporting students not achieving the DECD Standard of Educational Achievement.
2. Improve the growth of student achievement in Years 3 to Year 5 by differentiating the curriculum and providing explicit instruction to support the assessed needs of students.
3. Increase the proportion of students in higher proficiency bands by ensuring students understand success criteria and quality work. Consolidate the target setting processes to support students to improve their current levels of achievement.

Based on the school's current performance, North Ingle School will be externally reviewed again in 2019.

Tony Lunniss
DIRECTOR
REVIEW, IMPROVEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Anne Millard
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
PRESCCHOOL AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

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.

Dina Zunis
PRINCIPAL
NORTH INGLE SCHOOL

Governing Council Chairperson

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