

Department for Education

External School Review

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

Report for McLaren Vale Primary School

Conducted in May 2019



Government of South Australia
Department for Education

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 Debbie Grzczkowski, Review Officer of the department's Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate and Mikelle Miegel, 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

McLaren Vale Primary School (MVPS) caters for children from reception to year 7. It is situated 41kms from the Adelaide CBD. The enrolment in 2019 is 553 students. Enrolments have been increasing over the last 5 years and enrolment at the time of the previous review was 470.

The school is classified as Category 6 on the Index of Educational Disadvantage. The school's ICSEA score is 1017. The local partnership is Sea and Vines.

The school population includes 3% Aboriginal students, 4% students with a verified disability, 24% of families eligible for School Card assistance and 9 students in care.

The school leadership team consists of a principal in the third year of her tenure, a newly appointed deputy principal and a senior leader. The school also has a literacy coach, a numeracy coach and reading teacher who form part of a wider leadership group.

Previous ESR or OTE directions were:

- Direction 1** Ensure all students aspire as learners to achieve higher levels of performance every year by building the capacity of staff to design learning tasks that engage and challenge each student. Central to this process will be the involvement of students in setting learning targets that stretch them to achieve beyond their current year levels.
- Direction 2** Establish a whole-school approach to effective teaching and learning, initially in numeracy and literacy, then the Australian Curriculum, by working collaboratively to declare expected learning outcomes for each year level, and by agreeing to implement common teaching practices across the school to achieve these expected learning outcomes.

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

The previous ESR directions have guided the school improvement agenda since the last review. Significant professional learning has been a feature at the school over the past four years with staff undertaking a range of professional learning. Staff focused on developing challenging learning tasks, differentiation, and alignment to the Australian Curriculum to produce a connected curriculum. Leadership have supported staff through the allocation of time to accommodate collaborative planning that produced shared understandings.

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) have enabled staff to share practice and build understandings around student engagement and empowerment.

Work on the previous directions has enabled the school to collect and interrogate data as part of whole-school practice. The use of a central data collection program coupled with a data collection schedule has refined and produced cohesion around data.

Lines of inquiry

EFFECTIVE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

How effectively does the school use improvement planning processes to raise student achievement?

The principal discussed how a rigorous process of data analysis clearly directed the challenges of practice for the School Improvement Plan (SIP). Although the plan was created with limited consultation, staff and

governing council time was allocated during term 1 for staff to look at current practice and agree on pathways forward. Although staff valued working collaboratively to unpack the improvement plan, some reported a lack of connection reflecting their limited role in its creation. Moving forward, the principal is clear that all staff and governing council will be involved in the planning process, ensuring full ownership of the plan.

Staff articulated the expectation to link their Performance and Development Plan (PDP) to the SIP and the majority spoke positively about the 'pro chat' process to support their professional development. The panel felt with some staff not yet completing their PDP, there is opportunity to strengthen structures and processes that ensure PDPs are developed by all staff in a timely manner which supports the improvement agenda.

Leadership have worked with staff to set up supportive structures and processes to build teacher collaboration and drive the improvement agenda in the form of PLC's, level of schooling teams and action groups aligned to the SIP focus. This has been further resourced through the allocation of time. Whilst staff at MVPS are familiar with the PLC process, some report being unclear of the purpose and focus of each group. The review panel felt this provides a timely opportunity to work with staff to ensure clarity of the purpose, process and participant roles in each group, whilst understanding its potential as a driver for collaboration and improvement. Observations to improve pedagogy were also highlighted as an area for development. Having clear structures and processes to monitor and observe teacher practice, and linking it to the narrow focus of the SIP, will provide rigour and support a cycle of continuous improvement where everyone owns, and uses, the plan to improve student outcomes.

Direction 1 Ensure pedagogical coherence to deliver improvement goals through focused observations and feedback, and strengthening the PLC process.

EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND STUDENT LEARNING

How effectively are teachers supporting students to improve their learning?

Staff display a strong intent to support students in all aspects of their learning and there is an obvious focus on learning within the school. The panel evidenced that teachers had good understanding of the Australian Curriculum with most teachers using pre and post assessment to track student growth. All staff track data to identify students but the panel found varying degrees of how this was used to inform student learning, as differentiated lessons were not evidenced as consistent practice in all areas of the curriculum.

All identified students have a current individual learning plan to support and direct their learning. SSOs have dedicated class time and identified students are supported through intervention programs. Most students the panel spoke to indicated that work was 'just right' or 'too easy' and felt the need to be challenged and given harder work to push and stretch their learning. The majority of students report enjoying problem based maths as this provides an engaging challenge. Some teachers provide extension tasks or offer a 'sting in the tail' but this was not evidenced across all classes.

Through conversations with students, classroom observations, workbooks and planning it is apparent that teachers are predominately using learning intentions and success criteria for English and math activities. The panel saw evidence of excellent practice where success criteria contained self-assessment guides to motivate and stretch learners, but this was not evidenced in all classes.

Some teachers effectively use learning design with clear A-E alignment, enabling staff to easily moderate and grade work. The panel felt there was great opportunity to strategically harness and provide opportunity for these 'experts' to work collaboratively with others to ensure consistency in pedagogy and provide differentiated learning with stretch and challenge for all learners.

Direction 2 Ensure all students receive differentiated learning with appropriate stretch and challenge through collaboratively strengthening teachers' capacity in learning design.

CONDITIONS FOR EFFECTIVE STUDENT LEARNING

To what extent does the school provide conditions for effective student learning?

All students the panel spoke to felt happy and safe at MVPS. This climate is supported by staff who genuinely care about students. It was apparent that staff attempt to create positive and enriching learning environments to support students, with scaffolds and prompts visible in all classrooms. The school's focus on CAFÉ and 'Daily 5' was a continuing strength of the school, however the panel found inconsistency in other class supports. There is opportunity following the recent 'Play is the Way' training for all classes to display visual prompts to engage students with this focus and create a cohesive whole-school approach.

Staff use a variety of language to support student learning in the form of 'bump it up walls', task outcomes being 'cool', 'warm, or 'hot' and students being self-managers or experts. Whilst students value this pedagogy, the panel felt their effect could be amplified by staff collaboratively constructing a common language for learning to support students as they progress through the school.

The Review Panel was provided with evidence of goal setting for students. Goals varied in aspect: some were focused and targeted to the next steps in learning, others were generalised comments. The strategic intent to develop targets with students represents staff members' understanding that students who have ownership of their learning will maximise their potential and succeed. The school has had a previous focus on powerful learners and there are pockets of good practice, promoting a growth mindset for learning, but this was not consistently evidenced. Students at MVPS can articulate their learning and express a desire to own the 'what, why and how' of their learning. Students have the opportunity for leadership but this is predominately of an organisational nature and is external to classroom learning.

The school is well placed to support students to become powerful learners through the development and implementation of common, agreed practices and a common language of learning. When staff and students share the same language of learning, authentic student influence becomes an integral aspect of learning for all students.

Direction 3 Develop greater student agency through the consistent implementation of teaching strategies and a common language of learning that enable students to own their learning.

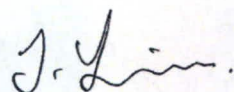
Outcomes of the External School Review 2019

Whole-school consistent and embedded practice in wellbeing enables a strong focus on learning which was evidenced through observations and discussions with staff, students and the wider community. Students feel a strong sense of belonging at McLaren Vale Primary School and report excellent relationships with staff. The school values are visible and guide student behaviour. Students are confident in discussing their learning and display a strong sense of pride in the school. The leadership team are highly visible within the school and are working closely with Governing Council to build and enhance community involvement.

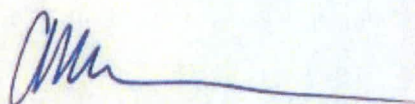
The principal will work with the education director to implement the following directions:

- Direction 1 Ensure pedagogical coherence to deliver improvement goals through focused observations and feedback, and strengthening the PLC process.
- Direction 2 Ensure all students receive differentiated learning with appropriate stretch and challenge through collaboratively strengthening teachers' capacity in learning design.
- Direction 3 Develop greater student agency through the consistent implementation of teaching strategies and a common language of learning that enable students to own their learning.

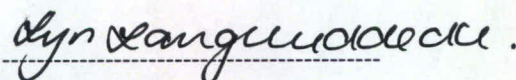
Based on the school's current performance, McLaren Vale Primary School will be externally reviewed again in 2022.



Tony Lunniss
DIRECTOR
REVIEW, IMPROVEMENT AND
ACCOUNTABILITY



Anne Millard
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
PARTNERSHIPS, SCHOOLS AND
PRESCHOOLS



Lyn Langeluddecke
PRINCIPAL
MCLAREN VALE 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, 69% of year 1 and 73% of year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. This result represents little or no change from the historic baseline average for both year 1 and year 2.

In 2018 the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 87% of year 3 students, 74% of year 5 students and 79% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement under the SEA. For year 3, this result represents an improvement, for year 5 a decline and for year 7 little or no change from the historic baseline average.

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

In 2018, 28% of year 3, 36% of year 5 and 21% of year 7 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN reading bands. For year 3, this result represents a decline from the historic baseline average.

For those students who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in reading, 66%, or 23 of 35 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5 in 2018 and 40%, or 6 of 15 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7 in 2018.

Numeracy

In 2018, the numeracy results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 86% of year 3 students, 80% of year 5 students and 79% 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.

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

In 2018, 27% of year 3, 21% of year 5 and 14% of year 7 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN numeracy bands. For year 3, this result represents a decline from the historic baseline average.

For those students who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in numeracy, 44%, or 14 of 32 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5 in 2018 and 39%, or 5 of 13 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7 in 2018.



Government of South Australia

Department for Education

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Dear Lyn,

Re: External School Review Report for McLaren Vale Primary School

I am writing to confirm the Executive Director, Partnerships, Schools and Preschools has considered and approved your school's External School Review report 2019. We would like to thank you for checking the report for errors of fact when the report was submitted to you in draft format.

Together with your governing council chairperson please sign the enclosed report and distribute the report to your school community and the wider community by uploading the report to your school's website within **4 weeks** of the date of the email.

The report identifies aspects of your school's performance which have been verified through the external school review process. The report articulates improvements that require action from your school.

Your education director has a critical role to play in supporting you to address and implement the findings of this report, and to ensure key future steps are incorporated into your school improvement plan.

Thank you for your cooperation throughout the external school review process. We value your feedback on the process and any feedback you provide will be considered to make improvements to how the process operates.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Lunniss".

Tony Lunniss

DIRECTOR

Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate

Date: 17/07/2019

CC: Education Director

Encl: McLaren Vale Primary School External School Review Report

