

Department for Education External School Review

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

Report for Lonsdale Heights Primary School

Conducted in October 2020



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 Simon Harding, Review Officer of the department's Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate and Nicholas Papadopoulos, Review Principal.

Review Process

The following processes were used to gather evidence relevant 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 Services Officers (SSOs)
 - Student groups
 - Teachers

School context

Lonsdale Heights Primary School caters for students from reception to year 7. It is situated 25kms from the Adelaide CBD. The enrolment in 2020 is 115. Enrolment at the time of the previous review was 123. The local partnership is Beach Road.

The school has an ICSEA score of 931, and is classified as Category 2 on the Department for Education Index of Educational Disadvantage.

The school population includes 20% Aboriginal students, 24% students with disabilities, less than 6 students with English as an additional language or dialect (EALD) background, 6% children/young people in care and 54% of students eligible for School Card assistance.

The school leadership team consists of a principal in their 13th and final year of tenure. There is a deputy principal in their 13th year of tenure, responsible for curriculum and wellbeing.

There are 12 teachers including 3 in the early years of their career and 2 Step 9 teachers.

The previous ESR or OTE directions were:

- Direction 1** Investigate and implement pedagogies and design tasks to provide intellectual stretch for students, while maintaining effective intervention programs and strategies.
- Direction 2** Support students to foster dispositions for learning through making thinking processes visible and to develop greater emotional regulation and perseverance, especially when faced with unknown and unexpected challenges.
- Direction 3** Guarantee students have access to a comprehensive curriculum by mapping and documenting the key ideas, strands and topics being taught at each year level and ensure students have the opportunity to engage with the subject methodologies that are intrinsic to each learning area.
- Direction 4** Analyse the achievement and perception data trends to identify more refined strategic improvement priorities and develop a plan of action that can be evaluated.

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

The school has undertaken professional learning and introduced consistent pedagogies in reading comprehension, writing and the use of learning intentions and success criteria. Intervention processes are clearly structured, both in the identification of students and support provided. Interventions are targeted, timely and reviewed regularly. There has been a focus on deep learning in mathematics working towards providing students with tasks which focus on higher-order thinking skills.

There is a consistent process used across the school to support students in engaging and building resilience to persist when challenged in learning. Common language and restorative practices are school-wide and aligned to the school values.

Data is informing decisions across the school. Teachers focus on individual student growth and implications for teaching. Site improvement planning is evidence-based and focused on building both student and teacher capacity. Leadership meet with staff regularly and student progress data is central to these discussions. Staff work in collaborative teams to reflect on their current practice and data to improve outcomes for students.

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 school improvement plan (SIP) is reflective of student achievement data. Leadership, with 2 staff representatives, developed the improvement priorities. Leadership then sought feedback from other staff. Staff understand the importance of building a collective approach to improvement. Teachers regularly reflect on the progression of student achievement data and building their own capacity to best support the students with whom they work. Staff and leadership discuss actions taken towards improving student achievement as part of performance conversations each term.

Staff value the alignment of professional learning to the site improvement priorities. The writing priority, using the Brightpath tool, includes the ongoing involvement of experts, mentoring staff through moderation processes. The improvement approach includes professional learning, time to implement and regular times to share the learning during 'scrums' (year-level meetings). Teachers could articulate how specific professional learning and resultant actions influenced their practice, particularly in writing. Planned opportunities to work collaboratively in teams to share and reflect is strengthening collective understandings and practices. There are expectations of linking professional development plans to SIP priorities. The principal provides regular updates on the progress of the plan to parents through governing council.

Staff are committed to the SIP priorities and leadership encourage teachers to investigate and trial proven approaches which may be adopted more broadly. Staff understand their key role in effective implementation of plan actions, and measuring the positive impact practices have on student achievement. Leadership schedule time in staff meetings and pupil free days for staff to reflect on the progress of the plan, with particular focus on student achievement data. 'Scrums' and professional meetings with leadership strengthen staff capacity to effectively discuss implications for intentional teaching based on the data. Observations of teacher practice, and discussions with students by leadership and members of the local education team, provided feedback for teachers aligned to the SIP priorities. Strengthening processes to support staff to more effectively monitor and evaluate the impact of actions against the success criteria, both individually and collectively, will continue to enhance the school improvement strategies.

Direction 1 Strengthen the collective efficacy of staff and strategic processes in the ongoing monitoring of the impact of the plan as measured by clear success criteria.

Effective teaching and student learning

How effectively are teachers using evidence-based pedagogical practices that engage and challenge all learners?

Teachers work intentionally to build and maintain a positive and challenging learning environment for students. Students understand that challenge in learning is important for their progress. They acknowledged that teachers work to engage them in learning and there is a good balance of challenge. Teachers work collectively to build students' resilience, allowing them to confidently undertake challenges in their learning. Learning intentions are used widely across the school, and students could articulate how these benefit their understanding of learning they will undertake. There were examples of teachers using learning intentions as goals for groups of students.

Teachers use success criteria to provide students with clear expectations in their learning. Learning goals for students are used by teachers most consistently in writing, using the Brightpath tool. Students were not as clear when articulating their next steps in learning. There is good teacher practice in developing strategies, which support students' thinking and acting on their learning, but it was not consistent across the school. Common understandings and practices to inform students where they are at and their next steps in learning is an area to continue to strengthen.

A collaborative culture exists across the staff, enhanced through provision of time and willingness of staff to undertake peer observations, plan and reflect on improving practice and provide feedback. The teaching team engaged in team discussions focused on strategies they trialed, aligned with SIP priorities, and their impact on student learning outcomes. There is an increasing focus on using evidence-based strategies outlined in the guidebooks. Teachers stated they work towards providing students with meaningful, authentic learning opportunities, particularly in the area of maths. While there is expertise, staff strive to strengthen skills and knowledge in effective task design that challenges all students. Deepening the critical collaboration to collectively implement and evaluate high-yield practices, which strengthen engagement and challenge for all learners, are next steps the school is well-placed to undertake.

Direction 2 Strategically foster high-yield approaches through continuing to develop teachers' capacity to collaborate critically when implementing and evaluating practices to engage all students in challenging learning, resulting in higher achievement.

Effective teaching and student learning

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

At Lonsdale Heights Primary School, class teachers regularly meet with leadership and in 'scrums' to track, monitor and analyse student achievement data. This informs the decisions made at a class and individual level and across the school by leadership. Teachers use common assessment sets, and a range of strategies for assessment of student learning, both whole-school approaches and individual. Teachers discussed their use of data to inform teaching at a class level, for example, grouping students to target the learning, and shared how these groups are fluid, based on regular tracking and monitoring of student progress. Data is used to identify students for intervention. School services officers (SSOs) have the information and training they need to support students effectively. Teachers and SSOs provide two-way information through an electronic format, including goals, progress, and next steps for students they are working with. This record also supports leadership to monitor intervention progress occurring for individual students. Students understand that effective feedback is important for their learning. Teachers use 1:1 conferences to provide 'in-the-moment' verbal feedback to students. There were some examples of how teachers share data with students. Strengthening the clarity of this work will enhance students' abilities to identify next steps in their learning, and continue to develop effective practices by teachers to differentiate planning and instruction.

Parents value information they receive through the formal reporting processes, and teachers' willingness to meet with them about their child's progress upon request, as well as benefits of ongoing electronic information. It gives them regular updates about their child's progress.

Teachers value the work they have undertaken in moderating student work samples, particularly in writing using the Brightpath tool. This work continues to build consistent judgement of student work. Teachers shared examples of strategies they are using, such as rubrics, to support student understanding of expectations for the learning. Further development of common understandings and practices to support consistent judgement in both formative and summative assessment will strengthen this work. Students and teachers talked about opportunities for students to provide peer assessment and feedback. Support for students to do this effectively is developing. Continuing to strengthen practices in effective feedback to and from students, leading to enhanced differentiated learning, will support students to take increased responsibility for their learning.

Direction 3 Provide students with clear information about their next steps in learning, through strengthening common evidence-based practices in formative assessment and effective feedback, working towards students taking increased responsibility for their progression of learning.

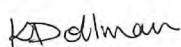
Outcomes of the External School Review 2020

There is a positive culture of learning across the school. Staff seek opportunities to collaborate with colleagues and build their capacity towards quality learning for their students. Parents trust staff and value the commitment of staff towards their children.

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

- Direction 1** **Strengthen the collective efficacy of staff and strategic processes in the ongoing monitoring of the impact of the plan as measured by clear success criteria.**
- Direction 2** **Strategically foster high-yield approaches through continuing to develop teachers' capacity to collaborate critically when implementing and evaluating practices to engage all students in challenging learning, resulting in higher achievement.**
- Direction 3** **Provide students with clear information about their next steps in learning, through strengthening common evidence-based practices in formative assessment and effective feedback, working towards students taking increased responsibility for their progression of learning.**

Based on the school's current performance, Lonsdale Heights Primary School will be externally reviewed again in 2023.



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Keith Beal
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Lonsdale Heights 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 2019, 63% of year 1 and 40% of year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. This result represents an improvement for year 1 and little or no change for year 2 from the historic baseline average.

Between 2017 and 2019, the trend for year 1 has been upwards, from 27% to 63% and for year 2 has been downwards, from 73% to 43%.

In 2019, the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 88% of year 3 students, 67% of year 5 students and 77% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For year 3, this result represents an improvement and for years 5 and 7, little or no change from the historic baseline average.

Between 2017 and 2019, the trend for year 5 has been upwards, from 43% to 67%.

For 2019, year 3, 5 and 7 NAPLAN reading, the school is achieving within the results of similar students across government schools.

In 2019, no year 3, 22% of year 5 and 8% 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 in 2019 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in reading, 50%, or 1 out of 2 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5, and none of 2 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7.

Numeracy

In 2019, the numeracy results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 63% of year 3 students, 56% of year 5 students and 62% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For year 3, 5 and 7, this result represents little or no change from the historic baseline average.

Between 2017 and 2019, the trend for year 3 has been downwards, from 85% to 63%.

For 2019, year 3, 5 and 7 NAPLAN numeracy, the school is achieving within the results of similar groups of students across government schools.

In 2019, 13% of year 3, 22% of year 5 and 0% of year 7 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN numeracy bands. For year 3, this result represents little or no change from the historic baseline average.

For those students in 2019 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in numeracy, 100%, or 1 out of 1 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5, and no students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7.