

EXTERNAL SCHOOL REVIEW

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools Division

Report for Kidman Park Primary School

Conducted in June 2017



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.

The External School Review Process includes verification by the Principal that key DECD policies are adhered to and implemented. This information is provided in Appendix One of the report.

This External School Review was conducted by Helen Tunney, Review Officer, Review, Improvement and Accountability Directorate and Steve Freeman, Review Principal.

School context

Kidman Park Primary School caters for children from Reception to Year 7. It is situated 9km west of the Adelaide CBD and is part of the Western Adelaide Shores Partnership. The enrolment in 2016 was 458, up from 411 in 2011. The school is classified as Category 6 on the DECD Index of Educational Disadvantage. The school's ICSEA score is 1045.

The school population includes 3% of Aboriginal students (16 students), 11% of students with a disability (49 students, including 16 in a special options disability unit), 14% of families eligible for School Card assistance, 37% (171) of students with English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EALD) background, and 3 children in care. The disability unit (Learning Centre) for students with severe, multiple disabilities (most students are significantly affected by cerebral palsy) is strongly integrated with the mainstream school. In addition, the school hosts a conductive education program 1 day per week, which is managed by the Special Education Resource Unit (SERU) and provides intensive physical therapy for identified students.

The school Leadership Team consists of a Principal in the 9th year of his tenure at the school, a Deputy Principal, and a Coordinator: Learning Centre. There are 3 lead teacher positions to support literacy, numeracy and wellbeing in the school (0.2FTE release time per lead teacher). There are 27 teachers (26.6FTE), including 8 in the early years of their career and 10 Step 9 teachers.

Lines of Inquiry

In considering the data summary in the School Performance Overview (Appendix 2) and the Principal's presentation, the Review Panel explored the following Lines of Inquiry to evaluate the school's effectiveness towards raising student achievement and sustaining high performance. During the external review process, the panel focused on three key areas from the External School Review Framework:

Student Learning: To what extent are students engaged and intellectually challenged in their learning?

Effective Teaching: To what extent is assessment used to inform curriculum planning and instruction?

School Community Partnerships: To what extent does parent engagement with the school impact on student learning?

To what extent are students engaged and intellectually challenged in their learning?

Through this line of inquiry the panel explored teachers' individual and collective beliefs about intellectual stretch and challenge, the impact on practice, the efficacy of practice in relation to improved student achievement, and the degree to which the school is supporting teachers to improve their efficacy in the interests of better student learning.

There has been a focus for some years on developing student cross-curriculum capabilities. Recently, the intent has become to develop a consistent approach across the school to embed 21st Century learning capabilities in all students. A learning approach has been adopted as the pedagogical framework to develop such capabilities and to increase the agency of students in their own and each other's learning. This approach is characterised by investigation, exploration, active learning, student choice and problem-solving. One of the characteristics of this pedagogy is the technique of 'focus students'. Each day, on a rotation system, 3 students are identified for the teacher to focus on each lesson, tuning them in to the intended learning of the lesson, and reflecting with them on their learning at the end in a modelled way to the class. Teachers told the panel that this 'focus student' strategy ensures that they are regularly challenging and stretching each child, as well as developing students' language to talk about learning.

'Big Questions' have been adopted as a whole-school approach to curriculum content organisation. Teams of staff, in collaboration with students, identify 'Big Ideas' from the Australian Curriculum to formulate 'Big Questions' to frame research and exploration by students. Units of work are then planned by teaching teams. These units include: a range of unit learning intentions, explicit teaching foci, and connections to various learning areas, including specialist subjects. As well, pre- and post-formative and summative assessment tools are identified in the unit planning stage. The units incorporate student interests, are connected to real life and students have input into their development through 'Connected Curriculum', a Student Action Team. The panel found that these 'Big Questions' are higher-order, challenging and complex, such as: "Why is migration so hard?" A point of development for the school is in relation to learning intentions. The panel found that not all students were able to identify learning intentions of the task in which they were engaged. Some knew there was a learning intention but they could not remember it. The learning intentions are very technically written and not accessible to students. The panel also found that stated learning intentions were rarely supported with identified success criteria.

Older students were capable of expertly describing to the panel the challenging learning in which they are frequently engaged through the connected curriculum units. Students in Years 5 to 7 were very articulate about their learning and demonstrated high levels of metacognition. They described the value of regular reflection, being given interim grades, and receiving feedback from a teacher during learning so that they can incorporate it into their final product, thus, using it to improve. However, younger students were less able to describe challenging learning and said that stretch is about doing more, or harder work, or being rewarded for completing work early by being able to do preferred tasks such as maths.

All students told the panel that they are valuing the flexible working spaces they have been afforded and are looking forward to the major STEM works which will open up the classroom spaces. They enjoy the interactive ways that teachers present learning opportunities, to learn by watching, doing and making things in a variety of environments, and they appreciate the range of ways they and their peers can access extra support when needed.

Teachers told the panel that they are increasingly using problem-solving, open-ended tasks, and techniques for higher-order thinking, such as extended brainstorming, and investigative, structured play in their pedagogies. Teachers said that they are increasingly teaching students how to question by giving them tools and strategies to ask richer, deeper questions. However, the panel found that some teachers continue to hold a view that intellectual stretch is for those who are identified with higher levels of fluency. Whilst all teachers are working with pedagogies that provide stretch and higher-order opportunities for all students, not all teachers understand that intellectual stretch for all is being provided for by such learning design.

Some parents said that whilst they recognise the efforts being made in recent times, they would like the more capable students to be stretched to a greater degree more often. Students verified this, saying they love the extension and advanced tasks and would like more.

The school has deeply engaged in the activation of student agency in learning. A series of Student Action Teams has been established to support the authentic voice of students in their learning and in the life of the school. Such teams include: Connected Curriculum, STEM Works, and Sustainability.

The school has received a STEM grant and has deeply engaged students in the roll-out of this investment in the school. Students, through the STEM Works Student Action Team, have been given authentic control over their learning environment and the panel could clearly see the impact of this during the school tour and classroom visits.

The panel found that other significant actions have been implemented in the interests of harnessing student agency in learning. Students are supported to evaluate, teach (peers and teachers through 'clinic groups'), research, and advocate for 21st Century learning, as well as to design learning through the research units. Teachers seek and act in relation to feedback from students about their experiences of learning, and modify learning design accordingly. In the primary years, students are involved in the development of assessment rubrics, they regularly self- and peer-assess, and some teachers share curriculum scope and sequence and whole-class student achievement data with them.

'Clinic groups' are a recent innovation. These may be run by a teacher, a School Services Officer (SSO) or an expert student, and serve to provide explicit skills development as an intervention strategy, to enable opportunities for students to 'teach', and to make learning more accessible to students through peer

tutoring.

There is a very supportive student culture in the school. Students know each other well through the values of the Positive Education Assist Real Life Skills (PEARLS) learning program that operates in the school (known in the school as the 'Joy Project'), and the integration of students from the disability unit (Learning Centre). The panel concluded that the 'Joy Project' is effective because it is multi-layered and includes regular explicit teaching from a specialist teacher, in addition to strong communication with parents, lunch-time programs, special events, and support for class teachers to transfer and embed student skills into classroom work. The school has developed its own evaluation tools for the 'Joy Project' to quantify its impact on students and their learning.

The panel concluded that the school's efforts to provide intellectual stretch and challenge for all students in the interests of developing powerful learners with 21st Century skills are deep, sophisticated and proving very effective. This work can be strengthened even more by ensuring all staff have a common, inclusive rationale for intellectual stretch and challenge, and by working in the space of more explicit learning intentions and related success criteria.

Direction 1

In order to enhance learning for students, make learning intentions more accessible and provide relevant explicit success criteria for each learning intention.

To what extent is assessment used to inform curriculum planning and instruction?

Through this line of inquiry the panel explored the capacity of teachers to use formative and summative assessment data to design intentional teaching. Moreover, the panel explored the ways that the data literacy of students and their families is being influenced by the school in the interests of raising expectations of learning.

A strategic intent of the school has been an intentional, planned focus on the development of staff, including lead teachers, teachers and SSOs. The Principal said that staff need the 21st Century skills that the school is seeking to embed in students.

The panel found that a strong improvement cycle of assess(reflect)-plan-teach characterises the collaborative work of teachers and SSOs. Teams meet weekly for 90 minutes, have regular review and planning days, and have scheduled common NIT times to facilitate their collaborative work. The panel found these teams have become increasingly independent through gradual release of responsibility and that there is now a good balance between school and self-determination of the team focus.

There is a strong culture of reflection in the work of teams. The teams use their time together not just to plan and trial strategies, but also to reflect on their efficacy and to make adjustments. For example, some teams have experimented with ability grouping students for maths across classes, but have since abandoned this as it was found to be problematic because of the number of high-needs students that it clustered together.

There are embedded agreements about data collection and analysis in the school. Data has been made much more accessible to teachers and to SSOs, and teachers regularly review data in their teams. Staff told the panel that they are now analysing data more deeply because of the regularity with which they consider it. Teachers said they spend time ensuring data is accessible to the next year's teacher as they recognise the importance of baseline data and not wasting a student's learning time each year by re-assessing. Data is used by teachers with students to set goals and to report student learning to parents and students. Reading development is monitored post-fluency through Lexiles, and comprehension development is an explicit focus Reception to Year 7.

Through the increasingly sophisticated application of student learning data, intervention has been re-conceptualised in the school. Support for students is now provided much more in the classroom. SSOs are better informed about the type and intention of the support they are to provide, and are included in team planning days in which the most effective support based on the intended learning and the evidence-based needs of students is considered. A special education support teacher has been appointed to meet weekly

with student support SSOs in order to communicate and consider needs in a regular, ongoing manner.

The Learning Centre (which services 16 students who are severely and multiply disabled, as well as non-verbal) is an integral part of all students' learning at Kidman Park Primary School, and, as such, is valued by all groups of stakeholders. Each Learning Centre student spends at least one lesson each week in a matched mainstream class. The yard activities organised for Learning Centre students are open to those in the mainstream. Mainstream students develop deep skills and understanding about the value of every person in our community, as well as competencies in respectful and rich relationships with people with a disability. The work of the Learning Centre staff is being influenced by the deepening analysis and application of data for learning design in the school. The Learning Centre has developed its own systems for quantifying and tracking student development of gross and fine motor skills through its Conductive Education Program. As well, all students are monitored in their development of the use of augmented communication. The Learning Centre uses the technology of the Pragmatic Organiser Dynamic Display (PODD) for augmented communication. The Learning Centre has adopted an explicit, evidence-based approach to literacy learning and has the intent of also doing so in numeracy. Parents told the panel that they value the great persistence shown by staff for the academic learning of Learning Centre students. Parents said that staff never give up on any student, and are endlessly patient and creative in the adjustments they continually make to move students forward in their learning.

As part of the site visit, the panel conducted a review of the current Site Improvement Plan. The school includes specific improvement targets in its literacy and numeracy agreements. A point of development is for the school to include these targets in the Site Improvement Plan so that improvement strategies are optimally purposeful and focused.

The panel concluded that a culture of reflection characterises the work and thinking in all groups of stakeholders. The data literacy of all stakeholders (their capacity to use an evidence-base as they reflect on and evaluate their efforts) is being systematically and effectively developed. Evidence-based reflection is used more in teams and with students and parents than it is used at whole-school strategic levels. This is a point of development for the school, to frame whole-school planning and improvement cycles with explicit targets for student learning growth.

Direction 2

In order to more effectively target student learning at a whole-school level, develop an evidence-base for all site improvement processes.

To what extent does parent engagement with the school impact on student learning?

Through this line of inquiry the panel explored the degree to which the school's improvement agenda is known about, understood and supported by families.

Teachers, leaders and parents strongly verified the quality of school-home communication. The school uses a variety of in-person, hard copy and electronic ways of regularly communicating with families. Parents reported ongoing proactive communication with families. The communication diary is a critical tool for home-school communication in the Learning Centre, and parents acknowledged the daily effort put in by staff to facilitate their access to information about the school day of a child who is non-verbal.

The 3-way interviews that are facilitated by the school are highly attended by families. All stakeholders value the presence and participation of the student in these interviews. This is another strategy that activates student agency in their own learning and builds metacognition about learning, as well as self-management of learning for students.

Teachers reported that parents want to know that their child is progressing academically, and teachers are increasingly using data to provide an evidence-base for conversations with parents about student learning growth. Parents verified that they are able to have very detailed conversations with teachers about any concerns they may raise about the learning growth of their child and that the school is always quick and successful in addressing issues. Parents care strongly about their child's safety and happiness at school and appeared to the panel to value social and emotional learning over academic learning.

Parents told the panel that they know, understand and value the 'Joy Project'. It enables successful connections with parents around challenging issues, and gives teachers, parents and students a shared language for no-blame problem-solving around student behaviour.

Teachers acknowledged that there is strong volunteer support for school community initiatives and events, and that sometimes parents are willing to share particular skillsets in working directly alongside teachers with students, for example, in the preparation of each class for the much-valued end-of-year school concert.

The school has taken steps to inform the community about its intentional changes to curriculum organisation, pedagogy and the learning environment. Unit planners are sent home each term, teachers explain the new approaches to their work at Acquaintance Night, and a workshop about starting school was held for Foundation student families in response to a need that surfaced through members of the Governing Council. However, school-home communication is strongly one-way, and varies in quality and frequency between teachers. Communication is largely about teachers 'telling' parents what they think they need to know in the interests of influencing parents to help with schooling.

The school community includes a significant number of indigenous students and their families. The educational wellbeing of these students is closely tracked by the school and the strength and health of connections between their family and the school are supported through the work of a skilled Aboriginal Community Education Officer (ACEO). The ACEO reports that she is strongly supported in this work by the senior leaders in the school. The school frequently achieves greater than 12-months' growth in a school year for indigenous students. Cultural competencies training is essential for all staff who come to the school so that the responsibility for the learning and wellbeing of indigenous students is shared and accepted, and the school is proactive in developing and maintaining the health of home-school relationships with indigenous families.

The Governing Council told the panel that there is parent involvement in the school at many levels. Through Governing Council, parents are supported to have their say and take responsibility for the school. The Governing Council gave examples about how they are able to have influence, such as recently discussing some potential changes to the specialist subject offerings at the school.

Overall, the panel could conclude that parents find the school caring, individualised, respectful, valuing, and inclusive of each child and their family. They told the panel that it is a school of choice for families. There is a welcoming 'vibe', students are confident and engaged, and they display a tangible level of self-worth and ongoing growth.

There is a strong, united, democratic, inclusive school community at Kidman Park Primary School in which all groups are committed to the learning and wellbeing of every student.

An area for further development is the opportunity for the school to work in partnership with parents to strongly focus student academic learning within the school's core purpose. By doing so, the school will value-add to its vision for strong academic learning across the broader school community.

Direction 3

Deepen the effectiveness of the school's partnership with its parents through collaborative review and refreshing of the school's stated vision for student academic achievement.

What is the school doing particularly well and why is this effective?

During the review process, the panel verified the following effective practices that are contributing significantly to school improvement at Kidman Park Primary School.

Support and opportunities are provided for students to develop and demonstrate leadership. The school works actively and creatively in a range of ways to authentically develop leadership in students. A range of Student Action Teams has been developed including: Multimedia, STEMworks, Sustainability, Community Awareness, Joy, Grounds, Sport, and Problem-Creating. As equal members of these teams, students work in ongoing ways with leaders, staff and parents to progress agreed initiatives through the development, implementation and evaluation of strategies. In this way, students take up a wide range of leadership

opportunities. At Kidman Park Primary School, student voice is deeply harnessed and valued in the interests of the school community.

Another example of how creatively and effectively the school supports the development of student leadership is the 'Helper's Licence' initiative. Mainstream students who qualify for this licence are recognised for their commitment to people with a disability. They work through a series of disability awareness workshops (run by special educators) and undertake a variety of tasks to demonstrate a level of understanding and skill in relating to and supporting peers with a disability.

Equitable and transparent opportunities are provided for staff to develop leadership capacity. Leading for leadership is a strong characteristic of the school. It is evident that, over a considerable period and in multiple ways, the Principal is fostering the leadership capacity of his staff. Such evidence includes the resourcing of lead teachers with release time and the strong culture of teaming that is resourced with staff meeting time. Each team has a focus teacher leader who represented their team and its work during the leaders' presentation to the panel. Teachers also reported that the autonomy they have and support they receive to follow up on professional interests contributes positively to their improvement in practice. A positive sense of professional self is being deliberately fostered over time in the school through quality leadership support and ongoing effective teamwork.

OUTCOMES OF EXTERNAL SCHOOL REVIEW 2017

At Kidman Park Primary School there is shared leadership across the school and authentic student influence in decision-making. Professional learning and performance development is translated into effective teaching across the school.

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

1. In order to enhance learning for students, make learning intentions more accessible and provide relevant explicit success criteria for each learning intention.
2. In order to more effectively target student learning at a whole-school level, develop an evidence-base for all site improvement processes.
3. Deepen the effectiveness of the school's partnership with its parents through collaborative review and refreshing of the school's stated vision for student academic achievement.

Based on the school's current performance, Kidman Park Primary School will be externally reviewed again in 2021.



Tony Lunniss
DIRECTOR
REVIEW, IMPROVEMENT AND
ACCOUNTABILITY



Anne Millard
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
PARTNERSHIPS, SCHOOLS AND
PRESCHOOLS

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.



John Clarke
PRINCIPAL
KIDMAN PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL



Governing Council Chairperson

Appendix One

Policy compliance

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

The Principal of Kidman Park Primary School has verified that the school is working towards being compliant in all applicable DECD policies. The Principal advised action is being taken to comply with the following DECD policies:

Policy:	Action(s) being taken to address non-compliance:
Documenting and monitoring of a site Parent Complaints policy.	The school has a policy in place but has not recorded complaints. DECD template to be provided to record and monitor complaints.
Site bullying data/trends/initiatives for the purpose of updating the school Governing Council twice a year.	Data has not been shared twice a year with Governing Council. Initiate new system to share data twice a year.
Implementation of the DECD Attendance Policy and an Attendance Improvement Plan, which has clearly stated targets and strategies to manage attendance.	The school has a policy and procedures in place to improve attendance but targets have not been set. Targets will be identified and new strategies implemented to achieve success.
Implementation of a Camps and Excursions Policy.	The school follows the DECD Camps and Excursions Policy and has a number of procedures in place but will develop a policy for the school.
Hazardous chemical register reviewed annually and only containing chemicals on the Approved Chemicals List. Safety Data Sheets (SDS) readily accessible for all chemicals on site. SDS reviewed annually and updated every 5 years.	Procedures are followed but documentation needs to be updated. Review and update procedures.
Work health and safety a standing agenda item at all staff and leadership meetings.	Traditional staff meetings do not happen at the school therefore WHS hasn't been an agenda item since the transformation of meetings. Develop a new routine for WHS to become a regular priority when teams meet.

When the school's actions achieve compliancy with DECD policy and procedures, the Principal must resubmit the Policy Compliance Checklist to the Education Director.

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 2016 was 92.9%

Appendix Two

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 2016, 58% of Year 1 and 91% of Year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement under the DECD Standard of Educational Achievement (SEA). In Year 1, this result represents little or no change from the historic baseline average. In Year 2, this result represents an improvement from the historic baseline average.

In 2016, the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 82% of Year 3 students, 69% of Year 5 students, and 77% of Year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement under the DECD SEA. For Year 3, this result represents an improvement from the historic baseline average. For Year 5, this result represents a decline from the historic baseline average. For Year 7, this result represents little or no change from the historic baseline average.

In 2016 Year 3, 5 and 7 NAPLAN Reading, the school achieved within the results of similar students across DECD schools.

In 2016, 49% of Year 3, 40% of Year 5 and 32% of Year 7 students achieved in the top two NAPLAN Reading bands. For Year 3, this result represents little or no change from the historic baseline average.

Between 2014 and 2016, the trend for Year 5 has been upwards, from 30% in 2014 to 40% in 2016.

For those students who achieved in the top two NAPLAN proficiency bands in reading, 72%, or 18 of 25 students, from Year 3 remain in the upper bands at Year 5 in 2016, and 50%, or 15 of 30 students from Year 3 remain in the upper bands at Year 7 in 2016.

Numeracy

In 2016, the numeracy results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 78% of Year 3 students, 72% of Year 5 students and 75% of Year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement under the DECD SEA. For Years 3 and 7, this result represents little or no change from the historic baseline average. For Year 5, this result represents a decline from the historic baseline average.

In 2016 Year 3, 5 and 7 NAPLAN Reading, the school achieved within the results of similar students across DECD schools.

In 2016, 39% of Year 3, 34% of Year 5, and 35% of Year 7 students achieved in the top two NAPLAN Numeracy bands. For Year 3, this result represents an improvement from the historic baseline average.

Between 2014 and 2016, the trend for Year 7 has been upwards, from 15% in 2014 to 35% in 2016.

For those students who achieved in the top two NAPLAN proficiency bands in numeracy, 82%, or 18 of 22 students from Year 3 remain in the upper bands at Year 5 in 2016, and 68%, or 13 of 19 students from Year 3 remain in the upper bands at Year 7 in 2016.