

Department for Education External School Review

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

Report for Norton Summit Primary School

Conducted in September 2021



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 Rebecca Pears, Review Officer of the department's Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate and Leanne Trewartha, 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
- Discussions with:
 - Governing Council representatives
 - Leaders
 - Parent groups
 - School Services Officers (SSOs)
 - Student representatives
 - Teachers.

School context

Norton Summit Primary School caters for students from reception to year 7. It is situated 19kms from the Adelaide CBD. The enrolment in 2021, as at the February census, is 73. Enrolment at the time of the previous review was 63. The local partnership is Mount Lofty.

The school has a 2020 ICSEA score of 1105 and is classified as Category 7 on the Department for Education Index of Educational Disadvantage.

The school population includes no Aboriginal students, less than 5% students with disabilities, less than 5% students with English as an additional language or dialect (EALD) background, no children/young people in care and less than 5% of students eligible for School Card assistance.

The school leadership team consists of an Acting Principal in their first year of tenure.

There are 7 Teachers including 1 in the early years of their career and 3 Step 9 Teachers.

The previous ESR or OTE directions were:

Direction 1 **Embed authentic student influence for learning across all learning areas and year levels, strengthened by the use of Visible Learning strategies in relation to how students learn at the beginning and end of units of work.**

Direction 2 **Build on the capacity of staff in the design of consistent teaching practices that integrate and effectively embed intellectual stretch, challenge and rigour into daily classroom teaching and learning.**

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

Teachers were involved in the Corwin Visible Learning professional development program. Learning intentions and success criteria are being used very effectively in some classes but practices vary across the school. The current Principal has requested for learning intentions and success criteria to be evident in lesson plans. A literacy mentor has worked with staff to guide best practice in teaching literacy. They are currently working collaboratively with the Principal to create a literacy agreement to support the development of consistent practice across the school.

There is some tracking of learning through pre and post tests, to monitor student achievement and provide intellectual stretch and challenge. Teachers have been encouraged to work collaboratively with students to discuss student voice and develop strategies and opportunities for students to influence their learning. This work was shared at staff meeting.

Lines of inquiry

Effective school improvement planning

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

Staff reported the implementation of the school improvement plan (SIP) has been ‘more authentic, practical and accessible’ this year and regular SIP review processes have occurred. These have included the use of traffic lights to assess the progress of the plan, unpacking of the success criteria, identifying pathways and barriers to achieving the plan and reflecting on changes to classroom practice. Some SIP actions, however, need to be further consolidated and strengthened.

A structured and evidence-based approach to the teaching of phonics and reading has been implemented across the school and is guiding teacher practice. Further training in relation to implementing these new programs would help to consolidate and embed practices. The Principal and a teacher have participated in mathematics training and this has resulted in more problem-based tasks being used in classrooms.

Most teachers have had classroom observations completed by the Principal and been provided with written feedback to support them to reflect on their practice. The Department for Education curriculum units have been trialled by an early career teacher which has supported their lesson ideas and provided a scope and sequence for mathematics instruction. Anecdotal evidence and pre and post testing in maths is being used to refine learning design and determine the impact of the SIP actions. Staff identified that whole-school analysis of achievement data would be useful to determine trends and identify next steps in learning.

The collaborative development of the SIP, containing priorities determined collectively through the analysis of multiple measures of data, will enable further staff ownership. Identifying and collecting a larger range of student achievement data that can be analysed to determine the impact of the SIP actions and changes to classroom practice will enable the school to refine practice and improve student achievement. A data collection schedule is currently being created which will help support the consistent use of data across the school.

Direction 1 Work collaboratively to strengthen cyclic review processes including the regular analysis of data to monitor the impact of site improvement planning processes.

Effective teaching and student learning

How effectively are teachers supporting students to improve their learning?

The school has strategically allocated resources to create small class sizes to support differentiated learning. Teachers have used student groupings to further adapt learning, some groupings are fluid to cater for individual needs. In the early years, students were assessed at the beginning of the year and grouped for phonics instruction. Reassessing these students regularly would help to monitor the impact of changes to practice and ensure that individual learning needs are addressed.

Practices in relation to the provision of feedback vary. Students are being provided with instant verbal feedback in relation to their learning and behaviour. Some students receive very explicit written feedback including rubrics which provides them with an approximate understanding of the grade they were expecting in subjects. Whilst some students were able to discuss feedback and explain how it supports their learning, other students were not able to articulate examples of learning feedback.

There is evidence that growth mindsets are being taught across the school. Planned and intentional stretch and challenge is occurring in some classrooms. Mathematics fluency tasks are evident and teachers are endeavouring to implement problem solving mathematical tasks. Teachers identified that it would be valuable to have more opportunities to share practice from R to year 7. In some classes learning intentions and success criteria were visible but this was not consistent across the school. Some success criteria are co-constructed with students and at times, students have created their own, enabling them to assess their progress. Portfolio folders containing assessments and samples of work are shared with all parents.

Assessments are not consistent across the school with individual teachers using their own assessments. A data collection schedule is being created which will be a useful tool to help develop consistent practice. Assessments need to occur more regularly to enable them to be consistently used to refine teaching practice and assess the impact of intervention programs. The analysis of assessments will help to determine the next steps in learning and identify the strategies to be taught to improve student achievement.

Direction 2 To regularly collect and consistently use data, to inform learning design, refine teaching practices and monitor student improvement.

Outcomes of the External School Review 2021

Parents reported that Norton Summit Primary School is a community minded school. They appreciate that there is a diverse student group and that students know each other and support this diversity. Parents also discussed that the school provides many opportunities for students to expand their skills and become more confident, particularly in relation to public speaking.

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

Direction 1 **Work collaboratively to strengthen cyclic review processes including the regular analysis of data to monitor the impact of site improvement planning processes.**

Direction 2 **To regularly collect and consistently use data, to inform learning design, refine teaching practices and monitor student improvement.**

Based on the school's current performance, Norton Summit Primary School will be externally reviewed again in 2024.



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Brodie Taplin
Principal
Norton Summit 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).

In considering the data below there needs to be some caution in making a judgement due to the low numbers represented in the student cohorts at the school. This is done for two reasons: to overcome the anomalies that may occur in any one year and to minimise the possibility of identifying individuals in any small cohort of students. The data below represents a summary of the aggregated data from Norton Summit Primary School from 2016-2019.

Reading

In the early years reading progress is monitored against Running Records. From 2016 to 2019, 56% of year 1 and 73% of year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA.

From 2016 to 2019, the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 78% of year 3 students, 74% of year 5 students, and 93% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA.

From 2016 to 2019, 51% of year 3, 42% of year 5 and 36% of year 7 achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN reading bands.

Numeracy

From 2016 to 2019, the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 84% of year 3 students, 84% of year 5 students, and 86% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA.

From 2016 to 2019, 49% of year 3, 24% of year 5, and 43% of year 7 achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN numeracy bands.