

DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
OFFICE FOR EDUCATION AND EARLY CHILDHOOD

EXTERNAL SCHOOL REVIEW
REPORT FOR GOLDEN GROVE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Conducted in October 2015



**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 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 Linda Olifent, Review Officer, Review, Improvement and Accountability and Lyn Bretag, 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 Golden Grove Primary School has verified that the school is compliant in all applicable DECD policies.

Implementation of the *DECD Student Attendance Policy* was checked specifically against a documented set of criteria. The school has implemented comprehensive tracking and intervention processes, and was found to be compliant with this policy. In 2014, the school reported attendance of 92.6%, which is marginally below the DECD target of 93%.

School context

Golden Grove Primary School is located in northern metropolitan Adelaide and has an enrolment of 700 students. The school has an ICSEA score of 1042, and is classified as Category 6 on the DECD Index of Educational Disadvantage.

The school population includes 1 Aboriginal student, 39 Students with Disabilities, 30 students with English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EALD), 3 students under the Guardianship of the Minister (GoM), and 20% of families eligible for School Card assistance.

The school Leadership Team consists of a Principal, three Assistant Principals and one Coordinator.

Lines of inquiry

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

Student Learning:

How well are students achieving over time?

To what extent are students engaged and intellectually challenged in their learning and how consistent is this throughout and across year levels?

Effective Teaching:

To what extent are teachers using data at the classroom level to develop intentional strategies to accelerate learning?

How well are students achieving over time?

In the early years, reading achievement is monitored against Running Records. An analysis of achievement (based on Running Records) through Years 1 and 2, from 2011 to 2014, indicates that an average of 59% of Year 1 students achieved the expected DECD Standard of Educational Achievement (SEA) and, at Year 2, 72% achieved the SEA. In 2015, 62% of Year 1 and 73% of Year 2 achieved the SEA or above.

In 2015, the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 88% of Year 3, 81% of Year 5, and 82% of Year 7 students achieved the SEA. The results are similar to historical averages. In Numeracy, 78% of Year 3, 84% of Year 5, and 84% of Year 7 achieved the SEA. Improvements in historical averages have been achieved at Year 5 and 7.

The 2015 NAPLAN student progress in reading, from Year 3 to 5, between 2013 and 2015, showed 28% made lower, 52% made middle and 20% made upper progress. From Year 5 to 7, 26% made lower, 46% made middle, and 28% made upper progress.

The 2015 NAPLAN student progress in numeracy, from Year 3 to 5, between 2013 and 2015, showed 23% made lower, 55% made middle and 22% made upper progress. From Year 5 to 7, 17% made lower, 57% made middle, and 26% made upper progress.

Higher-order skills are assessed in the higher proficiency bands of NAPLAN. At Golden Grove Primary School, the percentage of students achieving in the upper proficiency bands in Reading is highest at Year 3 and declines at Years 5 and 7. For example, in 2015, the percentage of students in higher bands in Reading at Years 3, 5 and 7 was 46%, 35% and 21% respectively. Percentages have increased above historical average in Years 3 and 5. In Numeracy, the percentage of students achieving in the higher bands is again highest at Year 3 and lower at Years 5 and 7, being 29%, 15% and 8% respectively. Improvements at Year 3 and similar results at Year 5 were achieved compared with historical averages over time; however, a decline was noted at Year 7.

Retention of students in the higher bands is higher in Reading than Numeracy. For example, in Reading, 63% of Year 5 students remained in the higher bands from Year 3, and 50% of Year 7 remained in the higher bands from Year 3. In Numeracy, 41% of Year 5 students remained in the higher bands from Year 3, and 35% of Year 7 students remained in the higher bands from Year 3.

The challenge for the school is to lift the proportion of students achieving in the higher proficiency bands and retain them at these levels as they progress through the school.

To what extent are students engaged and intellectually challenged in their learning and how consistent is this throughout and across year levels?

Students at Golden Grove Primary School have a very positive view of the school. There is a clear sense of pride, respect and caring evident across all age groups. They describe the school as well-organised and clean, with friendly and respectful students, and approachable and enthusiastic leadership and teachers. Students

expressed an appreciation of the range of curriculum programs and extra curricula activities e.g. music and sports. In particular, upper primary students spoke of the variety of leadership opportunities e.g. School Captains and specific groups in Environment/Entertainment/Public Relations. Participation in these was highly-regarded and aspirational amongst students across year levels. Clear processes, roles and responsibilities within these initiatives were articulated by the students. Members of the Governing Council also spoke of the value of the input of the School Captains at their meetings.

The panel heard how the school had developed transition processes for preschool students and adapted the learning spaces and Early Years methodology, based on research, to increase the engagement and achievement of Junior Primary students. Examples included Literacy and Numeracy screening tools, synthetic phonics programs and maths packs for individual students.

The panel met with groups of students across all levels of schooling. Students could articulate how having a growth mindset in relation to their learning helped them improve. Generally, individuals knew their academic achievement and how their learning was progressing. Students could explain the work samples they shared and described routines in class and the sequence in their lessons.

There was evidence that the level of challenge varied significantly between classes and learning areas; there is a need for this to be more consistent across year levels and throughout the school.

Intervention programs and support were described by the students as being readily available and specifically tailored for students who require assistance. Individual Learning Plans are in place for all students with additional needs. Parents also confirmed that effective programs were in place for students who need help to achieve the benchmarks, and that higher achieving students could be 'pushed' more, as well as the varying level of challenge between teachers.

The Teaching for Effective Learning surveys in Domain 2 and 3 had been administered during 2015. Students spoke of completing the feedback surveys. The panel noted the surveys indicated that while students were encouraged to try new things, they were less encouraged to talk about their learning with classmates. Further to this, students felt less comfortable sharing their thinking with others. A conversation with students confirmed this, and was more evident in the middle years. Some teachers had spoken to their classes about the findings, and how this information may be used to improve their learning environments and programs in the future.

Samples of student learning showed a range of learning opportunities and teacher feedback. The use of rubrics makes the assessment criteria transparent to students and can be a strategy to engage students in their desire to improve. Senior students valued the use of rubrics, and described a choice of assessment options available for them to demonstrate their learning. Students in the middle years described their learning as incorporating more worksheets and limited choices, with checklists more commonly used than rubrics.

Across all year levels, students agreed that the further incorporation of ICT would enhance their interest and learning for the future.

Direction 1

Continue to develop the use of student voice in learning to motivate, engage, and increase aspiration and achievement in learning.

To what extent are teachers using data at classroom level to develop intentional strategies to accelerate learning?

The Review Panel heard the Principal, Leadership Team and focus teachers clearly state the high expectations they have for themselves and of others in relation to the development of effective teaching. There is strong, effective, distributed leadership with clear structures, roles and responsibilities. This is widely-acknowledged and highly appreciated by the staff and community. A deep understanding of the structures and organisational practices of the school in focusing on future improvement is embedded across the school.

The Site Improvement Plan clearly documents how Literacy and Numeracy will be improved through the keys of Intentional Teaching, Wellbeing and Engagement, and the Australian Curriculum. Improvement targets are explicit and regularly reviewed according to the school timeline. Further to this, Literacy and Numeracy whole-school documents incorporate agreements in the improvement cycle in regards to: Tracking and Monitoring Every Learner's Growth; Enacting Changes in Pedagogical Practice; and Identifying and Enacting Clear Intervention Processes. School improvement plans and whole-school agreements are clearly understood by all members of staff and the Governing Council.

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) drive the improvement agenda, which is focused on building teacher capacity to increase student outcomes based on extensive data and evidence. Year level and elected focus groups have explicit processes and scheduled meeting structures throughout the year. At a staff meeting during the review, discussions verified that teachers are clear about how their involvement in PLCs is continuing to enhance their practice. A plan exists to further develop this concept across the Partnership of schools.

Clarity exists about the expectations of student data to be collected. Detailed data is collected and analysed according to the school time framework. The Review Panel found that the school is well-placed to correlate all site data, including: NAPLAN; the Progressive Achievement Tests; and the A-E Grades collected against the AC Achievement Standards, to influence strategic planning.

Intentional teaching strategies have been the focus of the Literacy and Numeracy priorities. The panel was interested in exploring how this was impacting at the classroom level, particularly in Numeracy. Teachers reported that adapting pedagogy to ask more open questions, increasing the incorporation of problem-solving tasks, offering multiple entry points, and varying the types of assessment, were techniques being incorporated to accelerate learning for all students, particularly in Maths. Data is used by most teachers to group students according to learning needs and to inform explicit teaching strategies and intervention practices.

Through staff discussions, samples of learning assessments, and classroom observations, the panel noted that the use of data in learning and assessment design, particularly for high-achieving students, was less developed in the middle primary years.

Direction 2

Continue to focus on intentional teaching strategies to intellectually challenge students, and incorporate a range of assessments to enable students to demonstrate higher-level learning.

Included in staff discussions was the use of technology as a learning tool to demonstrate learning and support students in showing higher levels of understanding. The incorporation of ICT varied between year levels and across the school, and lacked a coherent and innovative approach. Effective use of ICT is documented in the Site Improvement Plan. The panel encourages the school to further develop this component.

A strong culture of professional learning exists throughout the school. Professional development for all staff, including teachers and SSOs, is strategic and thorough, with an expectation that learning will be shared and plans for enactment will be put in place. Professional Development has resulted in increased professional reflection and subsequent improved pedagogy.

Performance and development processes are clear, documented and aligned to the Site Improvement Plan. The range of strategies includes observations, meetings, feedback, and e-cards.

The staff members of Golden Grove Primary School are a professional team who are enthusiastic and committed to achieving the aspirations they have for students and the professional expectations they have of each other.

Direction 3

Incorporate the effective use of ICT across all year levels to deepen and stimulate the learning across the curriculum.

OUTCOMES OF EXTERNAL SCHOOL REVIEW 2015

Golden Grove Primary School is tracking well. Good performance is evident through student achievement and ongoing collaborative review processes.

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

1. Continue to develop the use of student voice in learning to motivate, engage, and increase aspiration and achievement in learning.
2. Continue to focus on intentional teaching strategies to intellectually challenge students, and incorporate a range of assessments to enable students to demonstrate higher-level learning.
3. Incorporate the use of ICT across all year levels to deepen and stimulate the learning across the curriculum.

Based on the school's current performance, Golden Grove Primary School will be externally reviewed again in 2019.



Tony Lunniss
DIRECTOR
REVIEW, IMPROVEMENT AND
ACCOUNTABILITY



Anne Millard
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
SCHOOL AND PRESCHOOL
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.



Wendy Moore
PRINCIPAL
Golden Grove Primary School



Governing Council Chairperson