

# **Department for Education**

## **External School Review**

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

**Report for Moana Primary School**

Conducted in March 2020



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 Greg Graham, Review Officer of the department's Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate and Leanne Prior, 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 representatives
  - School Services Officers (SSOs)
  - Student groups
  - Teachers

## School context

Moana Primary School caters for children from reception to year 7. It is situated 36kms from the Adelaide CBD. The enrolment in 2020 is 465. Enrolment at the time of the previous review was 501. The local partnership is River Hub.

The school has an ICSEA score of 990, and is classified as Category 5 on the Department for Education Index of Educational Disadvantage.

The school population includes 5% Aboriginal students, 9% students with disabilities, 2% students with English as an additional language or dialect (EALD) background, 6 young people in care and 37% of families eligible for School Card assistance.

The school leadership team consists of a principal in their second year of tenure. The leadership team consists of the deputy principal, literacy and numeracy coach and a wellbeing coordinator. There are 23 teachers including 3 in the early years of their career and 13 Step 9 teachers.

## The previous ESR or OTE directions were:

- Direction 1**      **Focus on improving task and assessment design, and support students to develop growth mindset dispositions, to enable all students to be intellectually challenged.**
- Direction 2**      **Support students to know how to improve by creating opportunities to engage in goal-setting and develop strategies to achieve their goals, in an ongoing cycle of review and celebration.**
- Direction 3**      **Explore and develop ways to work collaboratively to strengthen student influence in the learning and assessment process.**

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

The current principal has been in the position for 3 years and it was evident to the panel that there had been intentional actions to address the previous ESR directions.

The school has worked at a site and partnership level on improving task and assessment design based on the LDAM strategy. This has been exemplified where teachers have connected with the Partnership STEM professional learning community to build content and pedagogical knowledge.

This has enabled the planning and assessment to be refined and adapted using knowledge and experiences gained through this process. Classes work on agreements to ensure an optimal learning experience for all students.

In response to direction 1, the review panel identified the use of language around growth mindset dispositions was well known amongst the students and staff with all teachers beginning the new year with a teaching focus on learning dispositions. Other strategies undertaken include genius hour as a regular feature of all JP classrooms and nature/outdoor play being used to engage students in deeper learning. The students are more aware of challenge within their learning and are seeking opportunities to be challenged.

In relation to students developing the concept of goal-setting to support their learning the teachers have focused on literacy and numeracy goals. Reading and numeracy goals are set with students in school intervention initiatives. The use of 'bump-up' walls in literacy and class-based learning goals displayed in



classrooms have provided visual reminders for students and are linked to their learning goals. Learning intentions and success criteria are verbalised and displayed in classes and are linked to learning goals.

Student influence in their learning has been addressed through opportunities for students to be involved in collaborative learning through STEM with buddy classes using computer coding and the review and update of the school values. Students have had input into the assessment criteria through co-designing assessment rubrics.

The review panel recognised that some elements of the previous directions are now linked to the School Improvement Plan (SIP).

## Lines of inquiry

### EFFECTIVE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

***How well does the school review and evaluate the effectiveness of improvement planning processes and the impact on student learning to inform next steps?***

The review panel recognised that the leadership team provides high levels of support and guidance for all staff and regularly meets to discuss the progress of the curriculum in line with the SIP targets. Regular updates are discussed with teachers at staff and year level meetings. The school refers to the core datasets of running records, NAPLAN and PAT assessments as the basis for setting SIP targets and tracking intervention groups. The 2019 SIP targets for running records and PAT assessments results are within a 4% variance of actual achievements.

The foci for the challenge of practice is numeracy, reading and writing with the school offering a comprehensive professional learning schedule in these 3 areas for all teachers and SSOs. Staff reported that the take-up has been positive with several commenting on how it has galvanised the focus on teaching practice at a personal and collective level.

Strategies in implementing organisational structures across the school address the learning priorities. Examples include redesigning SSO support in the classroom and yard-play programs, structuring shared non-instructional time for teachers to enable collaborative planning and using a coaching model to develop and demonstrate contemporary teaching practices. Teachers reported that the shared planning time has enabled them to work closely in linking the SIP priorities with their review of teaching practices, planning, curriculum delivery and assessment.

The school recognised the need to update their current curriculum agreements to address the changing focus for learning with the continuance of the literacy and numeracy approaches and the introduction of the Brightpath writing program. The next steps will be to ensure that curriculum agreements are completed and a commitment to action is undertaken. By strengthening the existing practice of involving all staff in the cycle of improvement, the school will ensure quality teaching practices that impact on student learning.

**Direction 1      To improve the learning for all students, strengthen the content and commitment of learning agreements to ensure consistency of practice to align with SIP priorities.**

## EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND STUDENT LEARNING

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

The review panel acknowledges that staff are collegiate, working collaboratively and sharing their practices and pedagogical knowledge.

The pedagogical survey indicated that 89% of teachers address the content of the Australian Curriculum, 78% engage and challenge students and 70% engage the students in the learning process. The differentiated teaching processes varied amongst the teachers with pockets of strength in some year levels and classes. Specialist teachers provided strategies on how they differentiate R-7 for their specific subjects. The teaching survey indicated that 56% of staff rated their approach to differentiated learning at a medium to low level with 19% of staff indicating that this was an area for improvement.

There are pockets of teachers using an inquiry-based approach in their classrooms. Teachers talked about involving students in shared learning by catering to student interests and planning specific independent work-tasks. Students in composite classes indicated that some classes offer extension work which was generally in the form of the next year level task.

Intervention programs such as the Reading Room and High Band Learning enable a targeted approach to enhance the learning of identified students. These 2 examples were viewed favourably by teachers, students and parents.

Formative assessment practices varied amongst the teachers with the majority using formative tasks to ascertain student knowledge and form ability groups. Learning intentions are often used as part of the introduction to individual lessons with the success criteria complementing the intention. The purpose of learning intentions and success criteria measurements was not clear for many of the students interviewed. Feedback strategies varied amongst the teachers with the majority providing instant oral feedback or conferencing with students. Some classes involved students in peer feedback assessments. The students would like to see more immediate feedback.

The consistency of effective teaching that engages and challenges students coupled with teacher analysis, feedback and assessment data in developing learning tasks are the next steps to consider.

**Direction 2** To meet the learning needs of all students ensure teachers consistently plan differentiated teaching opportunities that include formative assessment process with particular focus on student involvement in all aspects of the cycle.

## EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP

### *How effective are the school's professional learning and performance and development processes in building teacher capacity?*

The panel identified very strong evidence of collegiality across the school. There is an intention by teachers to do their job well and it was apparent that there is a sense of pride from staff through the continual access to updated professional development. All staff indicated that the strengths of the school included the supportive environment, the leadership team's approachability, greater conversation and sharing amongst teachers.

Teachers reported that the shared planning time has enabled them to work closely in linking the SIP priorities with their reviewing of teaching practices, planning, curriculum delivery and assessment. The application of a curriculum coach across the school has been highly valued by all staff. SSOs indicated that the training sessions have given them a greater understanding of skills for their work which has impacted on how they work. SSOs feel much more connected and are seen as partners in the student learning process.

Year level teams operate across the school although it was evident to the panel that there are differences in collegiate practices within the teams. The development of peer observation strategies that enable teachers to share practices and gain a greater knowledge of the curriculum continuum R-7 is a future consideration.

Staff recognised the link between their PDP processes and the SIP numeracy and literacy goals. The distribution of line-management responsibilities of the leadership team have enabled all staff to receive appropriate advice, guidance and feedback on their performance. The further development of observation strategies that enables teachers to share practices that link with SIP targets and challenges of practice is the next step.

**Direction 3      To improve the teaching opportunities offered to all students R-7, build on the consistency of teacher capacity and practice in learning design through continual high yield professional development.**



## Outcomes of the External School Review 2020

At Moana Primary School the influence of previous ESR directions is evident in the school's improvement. Effective leadership provides strategic direction, planning and targeted interventions. The school's planning processes are evidence-based and targeted. The school is effectively using improvement planning and monitoring processes to raise student achievement and providing effective conditions for student learning.

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

- Direction 1** To improve the learning for all students, strengthen the content and commitment of learning agreements to ensure consistency of practice to align with SIP priorities.
- Direction 2** To meet the learning needs of all students ensure teachers consistently plan differentiated teaching opportunities that include formative assessment process with particular focus on student involvement in all aspects of the cycle.
- Direction 3** To improve the teaching opportunities offered to all students R-7, build on the consistency of teacher capacity and practice in learning design through continual high yield professional development.

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



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# 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, 72% of year 1 and 74% of year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. This result represents a decline for year 1 and little or no change for year 2, from the historic baseline average.

In 2019, the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 85% of year 3 students, 78% of year 5 students, 75% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For years 3 and 5, this result represents an improvement and for year 7, little or no change, from the historic baseline average.

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

In 2019, 44% of year 3, 20% of year 5 and 8% of year 7 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN reading bands. For year 3, this result represents an improvement from the historic baseline average.

For those students in 2019 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in reading, 52%, or 11 out of 21 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5 and 50%, or 1 out 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 77% of year 3 students, 76% of year 5 students, 63% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For year 3 and 5, this result represents an improvement and for year 7 a decline, from the historic baseline average.

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, 30% of year 3, 14% of year 5 and 8% of year 7 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN numeracy bands. For year 3, this result represents an improvement from the historic baseline average.

For those students in 2019 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in numeracy, 39%, or 5 out of 13 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5 and 100%, or 1 out of 1 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7.