

DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
OFFICE FOR EDUCATION

EXTERNAL SCHOOL REVIEW
REPORT FOR GLOSSOP PRIMARY SCHOOL

Conducted in March 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 Liz Matheson Review Officer, Review, Improvement and Accountability and Helyn Strokowsky, 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 Glossop Primary School has verified that the school is working towards being compliant in all applicable DECD policies. The Principal advised that at the time of the External School Review meetings had been organised to ensure all Negotiated Education Plans and Individual Education Plans are current as at 2015.

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. From 2008 to 2014, the school's reported attendance has been at or close to the DECD target of 93%.

School context

Glossop Primary School is a small Reception to Year 7 school located in the Riverland and 226kms (route distance) from the Adelaide CBD. Currently, seventy seven students are enrolled. The school's enrolment declined by twenty children from 2013 to 2014.

The school has an ACARA ICSEA score of 957, and is classified as Category 4 on the DECD Index of Educational Disadvantage. The school population includes 14% Students with Disabilities.

The school's leadership team is constituted by the Principal. There are four classes. Reception children usually come to Glossop from feeder preschool centres in Berri, Barmera, Winke or Monash.

Lines of inquiry

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

Student Learning: How well are students achieving over time?

Education Leadership: What is the impact of staff's professional learning in developing a whole school approach to student learning?

Student Learning: How is the school tracking students' achievement and how effective is the intervention?
How effectively are teachers using the Australian Curriculum to support and improve learning?

How well are students achieving over time?

In 2014, 7 out of 10 Year 3 students demonstrated achievement in Reading as measured by NAPLAN, while in Year 7, 6 out of 7 students achieved the DECD Standard of Educational Achievement (SEA). There is a positive trend in the percentages of students achieving in the higher proficiency bands in Year 3 and Year 7. Of the seven students in Year 3 reading who demonstrated the SEA, six achieved in the higher proficiency bands. The results in Numeracy are similar. In Year 3, 8 out of 10 students demonstrated the SEA. One student who did not achieve the standard was absent. Fifty percent of non-exempt students in Year 3 achieved in the Higher Proficiency Bands. The retention from Year 3 to Year 7 showed 3 out of 4 students were retained in the upper proficiency bands.

During the pre-review discussion the Principal reported 2013 was an unproductive year for Year 4 students, with a number of unexpected teacher changes throughout the year. The performance of those students when they were in Year 5 in May 2014 showed a significant decline in all aspects of the test compared with their previous achievement in Year 3. Five out of 11 students achieved the SEA in reading, and one student achieved SEA in numeracy.

The achievement of students in Year 2 is a concern as only 33% met the SEA in Running Records by September 2014. The Review Panel was keen to know how the school is supporting these students.

What is the impact of staff's professional learning in developing a consistent approach to student learning?

Glossop Primary staff members have used Teaching for Effective Learning (TfEL) and contemporary research to inform the development of their pedagogical expertise. Staff members attend professional development together and subsequently agree on what they will trial. They bring samples of students' work to staff meetings to show evidence of what worked and what they learnt during the implementation phase. Parents advised they can see a direct link between teachers' participation in external professional development and what their children talk about some weeks later. Two out of three staff meetings are spent on professional learning to ensure there is common understanding of the research base to their pedagogy. The topics considered by the staff encompass the use of meta-cognition, ensuring learning intentions are clear for students, questioning techniques with a ratio of 2:1 (harder/simple questions) and use of feedback to and from students.

The Review Panel witnessed evidence of the way in which feedback is sought from students throughout their learning processes in order for teachers to adapt their teaching to be more effective. Teachers used

various scaffolds and strategies to continually gather feedback from students to ascertain their understanding or whether they have misconceptions so these can be addressed in the learning process. Students are taught how to gather feedback from other students to support their learning. Whole school agreements document expected practices about feedback, assessment, questioning and reporting. These processes are embedded in some of the classes. This was evident from information provided by parents and students.

The common approaches to pedagogy have developed alongside the school's engagement with 'growth mindset' and 'habits of mind' approaches to support students' dispositions to learning. Students use the language of 'fixed mindset' to describe how learned helplessness limits their willingness to take risks. They understand that a 'growth mindset' helps them to be courageous and determined. Students from Years 3 to Year 7, including students with disabilities, were able to give examples of when they were in a 'fixed mindset' and the consequences for their learning compared with examples of using a 'growth mindset'.

The language of the staff is consistent with descriptions used by students and parents. Parents indicated this approach was helping their children to manage their impulsiveness and to stay on course with approaching more difficult problems or tasks. The Review Panel verified the school is actively working towards common pedagogical approaches, which is positively impacting on student achievement. With the potential for staff changes in the future, the school is encouraged to work out ways of ensuring these practices are sustained over time. This work has started with documenting the agreed approaches and expectations.

Direction 1

Support students' use of 'growth mindset' to improve their learning by strengthening and embedding current agreed pedagogical approaches and align the performance development processes with the school's documented agreements

How is the school tracking students' achievement and how effective is the intervention?

Teachers have identified the students who are not achieving the DECD SEA and individualised interventions are designed to meet their learning needs. The Review Panel sighted documentation which demonstrated student achievement and progress is monitored regularly and decisions about what actions to take are based on assessments and observations. The approach to intervention is fluid. While contemporary programs are utilised to support students, staff noted that a 'one size fits all' approach does not work for all students. Some students were assessed as requiring greater emphasis on phonological awareness skills, alphabet knowledge, sight word and word recognition skills.

The school is aware there are gaps in the current Year 6 students' skills and knowledge. An intervention strategy has been developed to support this group with targeted tutoring by an additional teacher and with in-class support.

Staff members agreed to focus on differentiating the curriculum to meet the varied learning needs of students within the classroom after attending a professional learning conference. The use of charts to develop tier 2 and 3 vocabulary, self-assessment rubrics and literacy goals within science units of work are examples of practices trialled with the literacy coach. The staff also identified the use of different entry points, activating prior knowledge, individual goal setting and enabling students to make connections as practices to support different learning needs within the classroom. The improvement-focused culture and opportunity for teachers to share and learn from each other to embed these practices is available and encouraged.

Direction 2

Support students not achieving the DECD Standards of Educational Achievement, particularly in the development of students' reading skills in the early years, by continuing to provide a comprehensive approach to data informed interventions, within and beyond the classroom

How effectively are teachers using the Australian Curriculum to support and improve learning?

The broad range of opportunities across the curriculum and student leadership, through PICSE science awards, SAPSASA and the Arts are highly valued by students and parents, and are not limited due to the school's size. The Principal talked about wanting to build the critical link between curriculum and pedagogy. In conversations about the curriculum staff talked about learning dispositions and how it is important for students to engage at a deep level with concepts and ideas rather than a shallow focus on curriculum coverage. They talked about how students learn, thinking skills for the future and the importance of student choice as they become more independent learners. Teachers said they use an integrated, thematic approach to the Australian Curriculum and formative assessment is highly valued as it has a greater impact on learning. They have developed a common approach to planning, organised around 'know (skills), understand and do'.

Parents confirmed the portfolios designed to report student progress were a new initiative. They were able to see the whole writing process. They saw the first draft written by their child and the feedback they have sought to improve the final piece of writing. The portfolios also provide parents information about their child's progress in July and December. Parents talked about the communication between school and home, the strong partnership, and the willingness of staff to support all the children in the school. Apart from reading levels, parents were unable to talk about how well their children were achieving. The Review Panel found it difficult to see the alignment between the portfolio agreement "Glossop Primary Agreed Teacher Collection of Powerful Learning" and the Australian Curriculum. The school's lotus diagram used to develop the student learning portfolio makes no reference to the Australian Curriculum. It is not clear how the learning goals and rubrics are aligned with the Curriculum Achievement Standards.

Achievement Standards in the Annual Report are provided to parents as aggregated achievement. This approach makes it difficult for the school to use the Standards' summative assessment as a lever for reflecting on the rigour of the tasks set for students. Although the school has strong processes in assessment and for learning, assessment of learning is less evident. Common conceptions about what constitutes an excellent standard compared with a satisfactory are critical to consistently support students to progress through the school. Further, by developing curriculum knowledge teachers are able to ensure their students have access to the deeper concepts, ideas and proficiencies underpinning subject domains. This approach will further contribute to the school's success in engaging and challenging students to achieve and continuously improve.

Direction 3

Ensure students are supported to develop deep understanding and proficiency through the coordinated use of the Australian Curriculum for planning, assessment and reporting

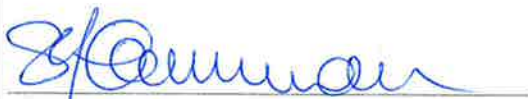
OUTCOMES OF EXTERNAL SCHOOL REVIEW 2015

Glossop Primary School is tracking well. Good performance was evident by ongoing collaborative professional learning and a strong parent school partnership.

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

1. Support students' use of 'growth mindset' to improve their learning by strengthening and embedding current agreed pedagogical approaches and align the performance development processes with the school's documented agreements
2. Support students not achieving the DECD Standards of Educational Achievement particularly in the development of students' reading skills in the early years by continuing to provide a comprehensive approach to data informed interventions, within and beyond the classroom
3. Ensure students are supported to develop deep understanding and proficiency through the coordinated use of the Australian Curriculum for planning, assessment and reporting

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



Susan Cameron
DIRECTOR
REVIEW, IMPROVEMENT AND
ACCOUNTABILITY



Anne Millard
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
PRESCHOOL AND SCHOOL
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.



Sue Andrew
PRINCIPAL
GLOSSOP PRIMARY SCHOOL



Governing Council Chairperson

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EXTERNAL SCHOOL REVIEW

for

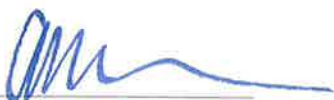
Glossop Primary School

was conducted in March 2015

The External School Review process supports schools to raise student achievement and sustain high performance. It provides quality assurance to build and sustain public confidence in DECD schools.

The public report with directions for the future is available on the school website.

The Review Panel acknowledges the co-operation provided by the school during the review process.



Anne Millard
Executive Director
Preschool and School Improvement



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