

# Department for Education External School Review

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

## Report for North Haven School

Conducted in November 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 Tanya Oshinsky, Review Officer of the department's Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate and Dianna Jarman, 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

North Haven School caters for students from reception to year 7. It is situated 22kms from the Adelaide CBD. The enrolment in 2021, as at the February census, is 297. Enrolment at the time of the previous review was 322. The local partnership is Le Fevre Peninsula.

The school has a 2020 ICSEA score of 991 and is classified as Category 5 on the Department for Education Index of Educational Disadvantage.

The school population includes 6% Aboriginal students, 11% students with disabilities, 1% students with English as an additional language or dialect (EALD) background, less than 5% children/young people in care and 25% of students eligible for School Card assistance.

The school leadership team consists of a Principal in their 1<sup>st</sup> year of tenure, an Assistant Principal with a wellbeing focus and a Literacy Coordinator.

There are 21 Teachers including 1 in the early years of their career and 12 Step 9 Teachers.

### The previous ESR or OTE directions were:

- Direction 1** Create clarity and understanding with staff around the targeted pedagogical strategies to be implemented coherently in classes across the school and build staff capacity to evaluate impact through multiple measures of data.
- Direction 2** Refine the strategic structures, systems and processes that support and enable staff collective responsibility to design, deliver and monitor the delivery and impact of agreed pedagogical agreements.

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

Multiple changes in the Principal role in recent years, has been challenging for North Haven School to retain focus on the previous directions. The introduction of the Department for Education's school improvement plan (SIP) has enabled the school to narrow its improvement agenda, resulting in a persistent focus on literacy. Implementing effective reading and writing practice has been at the forefront of this work, with more recent attention to the explicit teaching of phonics, in response to the phonics screening check data. Programs, assessment tools and targeted resources have been introduced to support the work of teachers. A Literacy Coordinator works alongside teachers to achieve school expectations.

Analysis of mandated data sets inform teachers of students' progress over time. There is increasing understanding of using data to inform practice. The intention of the data wall in the staff room is to track student progress in reading, writing and numeracy using agreed data.

Despite targeted professional learning and the dedicated work of teachers, inconsistencies in the implementation of agreed practice are noted across the school. There is clarity from current leaders and teachers, of the need to further build coherence across all classes of agreed effective practice, for further positive impact on learner outcomes.

## Lines of inquiry

### Effective school improvement planning

How effectively does the school monitor and enhance its improvement strategies and actions based on their impact on student learning?

Clear alignment exists between the school's improvement plan, performance development processes and professional learning. This ensures rigorous and continuous conversations occur about the improvement agenda. Introduced into the performance development timeline are 'walks and talks'. Authentic feedback provided to teachers from leaders' observations of classroom practice is highly valued. Teachers are also open to observations from their peers and share practice. Strengthened professional learning communities (PLCs) have enhanced a culture of collaboration. PLCs have clear agreements and expectations for deep collegial dialogue relevant to the improvement agenda. Teachers bring student progress data to inform joint work and to plan for next steps in learning. Teachers attending the partnership groups for leading learning in English, reading or maths, are taking the lead in PLC work.

Staff meetings are learning focused, either through a whole-school or PLC structure. Teachers report that SIP work is at the forefront of all meetings. They feel involved in implementing and informing SIP actions and in the school's self-review processes. Documentation of reviewing the improvement cycle is comprehensive and uses a traffic light system to indicate progress. Assessment of student achievement is used to indicate successful progress against the SIP priorities. Establishing additional assessment measures, at regular intervals, that provide further evidence that all actions and strategies from the SIP are having the required impact, is continuing work.

With changing leadership and improvement strategies over time, teachers and leaders identify that building rigour and consistency in practice could be improved across the school. Whole-school agreements also need revisiting to reflect the expectations of what best practice looks like at all levels of schooling. As there has been a long-term focus on literacy, stakeholders would like to have maths back on the improvement agenda. Building teacher capacity to embed evidence-based effective practice across the curriculum, can be achieved by collecting and evaluating evidence of student learning in relation to teaching practice. This promotes a cyclic process of monitoring, evaluating, reviewing and planning, to refine and adjust teacher practice for best student outcomes. Consideration should be given to the processes that have led to the successful deep implementation of explicit phonics instruction in the early years, to further embed effective practice across other areas of the curriculum.

**Direction 1     Strengthen structures and processes that build teacher and leadership capacity to drive improvement, including evaluation of most effective practices that are then embedded school wide.**

## Effective leadership

How well does leadership facilitate the development of coherent high quality curriculum planning and effective teaching?

Consistent, effective, and improved practice in the explicit teaching of phonics in all early years' classes has occurred through connected work with the partnership 'leading learning in reading' group, the early years' PLC, and support from a literacy guarantee unit coach. Regular assessment processes enable teachers to identify growth and target learning. Further differentiating learning for students and continuing to support students as they transition to higher year levels, are already identified next steps. All class teachers are trialing a literacy unit of work from the Department for Education's new curriculum materials. This work is the focus of the primary PLC. Teachers report these materials have promoted good conversations about matching curriculum to student needs, included assessment practices and new ideas. Further familiarisation with these curriculum units will be ongoing work for the school.

Learning intentions and success criteria are a whole-school agreed pedagogical practice and were a focus for one of the 'walks and talks' earlier this year. These practices are visible in all classrooms and most students are aware of them. While there is variable practice, in some classrooms these strategies provide students with the skills to be more independent in their learning and to aim for higher outcomes. There is opportunity to further deepen these practices ensuring all students can be successful, by scaffolding or differentiating them for all learners to be stretched and challenged in their daily learning. Some of the other programs, strategies, and assessments that teachers implement, are also under utilised. Deepening these practices for greatest impact in student learning will require further exploration of how they can most effectively and coherently be implemented across classes.

Teachers are keen for further clarity on what is expected current practice. Establishing a culture of high expectations for ongoing improvement in teacher practice and student outcomes is essential. While teachers are hardworking and dedicated to their work, and parents and students say teachers support student learning well, all stakeholders identify stretch and challenge in daily learning as an area for growth. Students say they particularly find learning in English easy and could be challenged more. Accommodating more stretch in learning is achieved through teachers designing rich learning tasks, regularly assessing student achievement to target learning more accurately, and effectively implementing high impact strategies that enable students to take more responsibility for improving their own outcomes.

**Direction 2      Strengthen effective, rigorous and consistent practice across the school in curriculum delivery, assessment and high impact strategies to ensure daily stretch and challenge.**

## Effective teaching and student learning

How effectively are teachers analysing assessment and feedback data to inform differentiated curriculum planning and instruction?

An assessment schedule outlines the annual and biannual data that is collected regularly by teachers each year. Some assessment tools have been introduced for more regular monitoring of student achievement, particularly in phonics and spelling, which enables teachers to inform their daily practice. Staff recognise the need to establish a consistent and broader suite of assessment tools across the school. Regular monitoring of student progress during the year and across the curriculum is essential for all learning to be targeted according to students' developing needs.

Many of the formative assessment practices teachers use to inform them of student learning are described as after the learning. Feedback was described by teachers and students as mostly verbal, and students report they often keep the feedback 'in their heads' to use next time. It is important that formative assessment that enables explicit feedback during tasks is prioritised to continuously stretch student outcomes. Teachers are also mindful that they could be collecting more frequent feedback from students about the teaching and learning to further refine their practice. Students are positive about their teachers and feel very supported in their learning.

Reflection time has been introduced for students to explain their thinking, particularly in maths. This strategy provides opportunity for teachers to assess student understanding. In some classes, students have rubrics for larger tasks which enable them to know how they can improve their work. Learning intentions and success criteria when explained, referred to and detailed, also support greater success. Most students however are unable to articulate how they are going or what strategies they can use to achieve higher levels of learning. When teachers share with students their ongoing assessments and discuss with them what they know and need to know, this will enable students to set explicit goals that challenge them. Currently, teachers set goals or students choose a goal based on what they think they should be better at. To develop a cyclic process that promotes student' ownership of setting, monitoring and reviewing their goals, students need an understanding of the progression of learning in relation to their achievement. The school could further explore sequences of learning they already use or curriculum resources to enable this work.

**Direction 3    Embed regular and consistent monitoring of student achievement, inclusive of formative assessment and reciprocal feedback, to inform responsive teaching and student self-directed learning.**

# Outcomes of the External School Review 2021

At North Haven School, staff are committed to improvement and a culture of shared learning and collaboration. With stability in the position of Principal, staff and parents have greater clarity of planned strategic actions for ongoing improvement. Staff genuinely want to support students to do their best and are willing to embrace new learning. Students feel their teachers care about them and support them to be successful learners. Aligning agreed practice with evidence-based pedagogical practices that are embedded consistently and coherently across the school, will enhance student learning and achievement. The school is well positioned to strengthen this work through the implementation of the external review directions.

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

- Direction 1**    **Strengthen structures and processes that build teacher and leadership capacity to drive improvement, including evaluation of most effective practices that are then embedded school wide.**
- Direction 2**    **Strengthen effective, rigorous and consistent practice across the school in curriculum delivery, assessment and high impact strategies to ensure daily stretch and challenge.**
- Direction 3**    **Embed regular and consistent monitoring of student achievement, inclusive of formative assessment and reciprocal feedback, to inform responsive teaching and student self-directed learning.**

Based on the school's current performance, North Haven School will be externally reviewed again in 2024.



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North Haven School



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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).

### Reading

In the early years reading progress is monitored against Running Records. In 2020 72% of year 1 and 60% of year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. This result represents an improvement from the historic baseline average for year 1 and a decline from the historic baseline average for year 2.

In 2021 the reading results as measured by NAPLAN indicate that 90% of year 3 students, 86% of year 5 students and 74% 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 this result represents little or no change, from the historic baseline average.

Between 2018 and 2021 the trend for years 3 and 5 has been upwards from 80% to 90% and 80% to 86% respectively.

For 2021 year 3 NAPLAN reading the school is achieving higher than the results of similar students across government schools. For years 5 and 7 NAPLAN reading the school is achieving within the results of similar students across government schools.

In 2021 47% of year 3, 29% of year 5 and 20% 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 2021 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in reading 55% or 6 out of 11 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5 and 57% or 4 out of 7 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7.

### Numeracy

In 2021 the numeracy results as measured by NAPLAN indicate that 67% of year 3 students, 68% of year 5 students and 91% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For year 3 this result represents a decline, for year 5 this result represents little or no change, and for year 7 this result represents an improvement, from the historic baseline average.

For 2021 year 3 NAPLAN numeracy the school is achieving lower than the results of similar groups of students across government schools. For year 5 NAPLAN numeracy the school is achieving within the results of similar groups of students across government schools. For year 7 NAPLAN numeracy the school is achieving higher than the results of similar groups of students across government schools.

In 2021 31% of year 3, 4% of year 5 and 26% 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 2021 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in numeracy 17% or 1 out of 6 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5 and 67% or 6 out of 9 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7.