

# Department for Education External School Review

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

## Report for Salisbury North R-7 School

Conducted in November 2020



# 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 Phil Garner, Review Officer of the department's Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate and Linda Ritchie and Dora Iuliano, Review Principals.

## 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 representatives
  - Teachers

## School context

Salisbury North R-7 School caters for children from reception to year 7, both in a mainstream setting and through an Intensive English Language Program (IELP). It is situated 22kms from the Adelaide CBD. The enrolment in 2020 is 510 students. Enrolment at the time of the previous review was 422 students. The local partnership is Orion.

The school has an ICSEA score of 911 and is classified as Category 2 on the Department for Education Index of Educational Disadvantage.

The school population includes 12% Aboriginal students, 9% students with disabilities, 25% students with English as an additional language or dialect (EALD) background, less than 6 children/young people in care and 63% of students eligible for School Card assistance.

Ninety percent of children in the IELP program are refugees coming from over 40 countries.

The school leadership team consists of a principal in their 1<sup>st</sup> year of tenure and 6 assistant principals.

There are 38 teachers including 3 in the early years of their career and 5 Step 9 teachers.

### The previous ESR or OTE directions were:

- Direction 1**     **Increase numbers of students reaching and maintaining higher standards of achievement by strengthening the learning design process to build assessment that enables students to strive for and demonstrate higher-order thinking.**
- Direction 2**     **Strengthen the practices that meet the needs of all learners by refining the use of student-led inquiry-based pedagogy to a model of guided inquiry that supports all students to meet curriculum expectations.**
- Direction 3**     **Move students to higher levels of achievement by improving the use of formative assessment strategies, particularly the use of feedback to students that is specific and task-relevant.**
- Direction 4**     **Improve student achievement in numeracy through using the Australian Curriculum to develop and implement a coherent and agreed whole-school curriculum and pedagogical approach to teaching and learning in mathematics.**

<b>What impact has the implementation of previous directions had on school improvement?</b>
<p><b>Direction 1</b> Some improvement in student achievement in reading and numeracy is evident, particularly in year 3. However, these levels are not maintained as students progress through school. The design of learning continues to be a focus and is becoming more consistent under the new leadership. Developing higher-order thinking skills remains an area for continued focus.</p>

**Direction 2**

Teacher's awareness of the need to include student voice in the design of learning exists, but is not being implemented effectively yet. A thematic approach to curriculum delivery was noted in some classes allowing curriculum areas to be connected together and integrated within a theme. However, the depth and rigour required to ensure students are engaging in high-level thinking was not evident.

**Direction 3**

Summative assessments are providing information on strengths and areas for development, guide the design of learning and formulation of SMARTAR student goals. Formative feedback and assessment that effectively provides students with individual guidance during the learning process is still developing.

**Direction 4**

Student achievement in numeracy continues to be an area for improvement. While year 3 students increased their achievement marginally, other year levels continue to maintain low achievement. Numeracy was identified by the school as an area for continued development over the coming year.

## 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?

A wide range of student and school data was, and continues to be, systematically analysed to identify student learning needs and monitor their growth. Teachers indicated a shared and collective responsibility for improving outcomes for all students.

Newly formed impact teams analyse and unpack teacher strengths in goal areas, and continue to focus on:

- improving pedagogy around the challenges of practice
- building teacher capacity
- improving consistency of teacher practice
- in-depth and strategic analysis of students' progress
- reviewing and evaluating pedagogical practices against impact on student learning.

In-class observations conducted by leadership identify strengths and areas for professional growth with teachers valuing the feedback provided. Follow-up observations strategically focus on incremental teacher improvement.

A new literacy intervention strategy is currently being trialled across the early years. The emphasis is on differentiated learning with individual goals based on active data. Analysis and tracking of student progress takes place every 3 weeks. Teachers said: "students are no longer flying under the radar". This trial is in its early stages of implementation, but is showing promising results. The school continues to review the strategy and see the benefits of continuing this beyond the trial period.

The school's IELP is an important and integral part of the school and critical to the education of newly arrived children and their families. With the majority of students transitioning into the mainstream, it is important for all teachers to have an understanding of the program. Individual and collective accountability to consistently implement whole-school agreements, policies and procedures is critical. This will ensure optimum learning outcomes for every student in every classroom.

The challenges of practice are central to the school's improvement journey, with high levels of staff commitment to achieving goals. The school is now well-placed to review and evaluate the improvement plan with greater staff, and possibly student collaboration and consultation.

**Direction 1     Strengthen and embed consistency of practice and processes by ensuring that all teachers are active participants in the ongoing development, implementation and review of the school improvement plan.**

## Effective teaching and student learning

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

Formative assessment was identified by most staff as an area for improvement. Currently, assessment of learning is predominantly used to assess students against a criteria or standard. Where formative feedback and assessment is being used there is minimum impact on student learning. The panel also noted significant amounts of unfinished learning tasks in student books.

'Bump it up' walls are used effectively in a number of classes, providing students with opportunities to see the progression of learning and self-moderate against the criteria. Students mentioned the moderation process helps them identify and achieve explicit learning goals.

Student goal-setting is dynamic and an embedded practice across the school. Most students could clearly identify where they are, where they need to be and what they need to do in their learning.

The quality of teaching and learning varies considerably across the school. The panel noted examples of explicit teaching, with differentiated teaching strategies designed to meet the needs of individual students. However, students reported, and the panel verified, learning that was repetitive and less than challenging, particularly in teaching vocabulary and science. With science identified as a core learning area, it is important for all students to be engaged effectively in developing their skills, knowledge and understanding. The department has recently released curriculum support materials and published best practice papers that will guide the effective design of engaging and challenging learning.

Some teachers and students engage effectively in the analysis of progressive achievement test data and identify areas of strength and growth. This leads to improved student ownership, responsibility and understanding of their learning requirements.

Teaching and learning conditions in the upper primary unit will need to be an area for focused improvement. Students, and some parents, said student learning needs are not being adequately catered for. Behaviour management concerns often override learning opportunities with equity of access to quality curriculum being compromised. The panel suggests that Domain 2 of Teaching for Effective Learning (TfEL) be considered as a resource for professional learning and implementation.

**Direction 2** To increase student responsibility and ownership of their learning, implement high-quality formative assessment and feedback strategies consistently in all classes.

**Direction 3** Improve teaching learning conditions in the upper primary classes by implementing and embedding key actions from domains 2.1 and 2.2 of TfEL.

## Conditions for effective student learning

To what extent does the school promote a culture of learning with high expectations of achievement for all learners?

The school is focused on developing routines and structures to support high expectations in student learning and teaching. Professional learning opportunities in literacy are nurturing a culture of sharing and learning together. Sessions are targeted and differentiated for the learning needs of staff and highly valued.

Collaboration and consistency is driving the improvement agenda, increasing teacher accountability and raising expectations across the school. There are significant changes in the school narrative with a stronger focus on teaching and learning. Introducing the uninterrupted literacy block for the whole school sends a clear message about the importance of literacy and high expectations for student achievement.

The role of school services officers (SSOs) has changed significantly. They now work closely with teachers in class and participate in relevant professional learning. They understand the needs of students better, and value the opportunity to have planning time with teachers. SSOs feel empowered and valued as co-educators.

Teachers said that a strong professional learning culture exists between teachers in impact groups, but is not as strong between the groups across the school. It is acknowledged that greater whole-school collaboration would further build teacher capacity and enhance student learning.

Teachers discussed the need for a formal observation process, including 'learning walks' that will provide professional feedback on their performance and monitor successful implementation of whole-school initiatives. Understanding teaching and learning in other sections of the school builds collegiality and a sense of community, and is highlighted as a need by teachers.

The principal guides professional learning of the leadership team, building their capacity to lead and support the teaching and learning. Weekly meetings assist in building a strong leadership culture. There is a high level of trust between leaders.

The panel acknowledges the significant change that occurred over the past 12 months in redefining the culture to one of collective accountability, building teacher capacity and improving learning outcomes for students.

**Direction 4** Enhance teacher professional learning and collaboration through the development of a collective and cohesive R-7 teaching and learning community.

# Outcomes of the External School Review 2020

Significant change across the school occurred over the past 12 months, resulting in improved environmental changes and a refocus on teaching and learning. Monitoring student achievement data generated greater staff responsibility and accountability for improvement. Collaboration, communication and implementation of impact teams will help develop a positive improvement culture.

The school's improvement journey is still a work-in-progress, but with solid foundations, will evolve and have significant influence in improving outcomes for students.

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

- Direction 1**     **Strengthen and embed consistency of practice and processes by ensuring that all teachers are active participants in the ongoing development, implementation and review of the school improvement plan.**
- Direction 2**     **To increase student responsibility and ownership of their learning, implement high-quality formative assessment and feedback strategies consistently in all classes.**
- Direction 3**     **Improve teaching learning conditions in the upper primary classes by implementing and embedding key actions from domains 2.1 and 2.2 of TfEL.**
- Direction 4**     **Enhance teacher professional learning and collaboration through the development of a collective and cohesive R-7 teaching and learning community.**

Based on the school's current performance, Salisbury North R-7 School will be externally reviewed again in 2023.




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Kerry Dollman  
Director  
Review, Improvement and Accountability



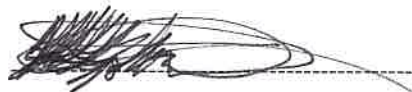
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Anne Millard  
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Partnerships, Schools and Preschools



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Catherine Cox-Wallis  
Principal  
Salisbury North R-7 School



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Governing Council Chairperson





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Dear Catherine,

**Re: External School Review Report for Salisbury North R-7 School**

I am writing to confirm the Executive Director, Partnerships, Schools and Preschools has considered and approved your school's External School Review Report. We would like to thank you for checking the report for errors of fact when the report was submitted to you in draft format.

Together with your governing council chairperson please sign the report which was emailed to you, and distribute the report to your school and wider community by uploading it to your school's website within **4 weeks** of the date of the email.

The report identifies aspects of your school's performance which have been verified through the External School Review process. The report articulates improvements that require action from your school.

Your education director has a critical role to play in supporting you to address and implement the findings of this report, and to ensure key future steps are incorporated into your school improvement plan.

Thank you for your cooperation throughout the External School Review process.

You will be mailed a certificate of appreciation to serve as an acknowledgement to you, your staff and your school community for the time and effort you contributed as part of the External School Review process.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kerry Dollman".

Kerry Dollman  
**DIRECTOR**  
Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate  
21 January 2021

CC: Education Director  
Encl: External School Review Report  
External School Review Certificate

# 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, 32% of year 1 and 36% of year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. This result represents a decline for year 1 students and an improvement for year 2 students from the historic baseline average.

Between 2017 and 2019, the trend for year 1 downwards, from 37% to 32%.

In 2019, the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 80% of year 3 students, 66% of year 5 students and 57% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For years 3, 5 and 7 this result represents an improvement from the historic baseline average.

Between 2017 and 2019, the trend for year 5 has been upwards, from 48% to 66%.

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

In 2019, 38% of year 3, 13% of year 5 and 4% 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, 25%, or 2 out of 8 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5 and 40%, or 2 out of 5 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7.

### Numeracy

In 2019, the numeracy results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 70% of year 3 students, 53% of year 5 students and 43% 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, NAPLAN numeracy, the school is achieving within and in years 5 and 7, below the results of similar groups of students across government schools.

Between 2017 and 2019, the school has consistently achieved lower in year 5 NAPLAN numeracy relative to the results of similar groups of students across government schools.

Between 2017 and 2019, the trend for year 5 has been upwards from 35% to 53% and for year 7 downwards from 69% to 43%.

In 2019, 15% of year 3, 4% of year 5 and no 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, 29%, or 2 out of 7 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5.