

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

EXTERNAL SCHOOL REVIEW
REPORT FOR AUBURN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Conducted in March 2016



**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 framework underpinning the External School Review identifies the key levers for school improvement and has been shaped and informed by research.

The overarching review question is "How well does this school improve student achievement, growth, challenge, engagement and equity?"

This Report of the External School Review 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.

The support and cooperation provided by the staff and school community is acknowledged. While not all review processes, artefacts and comments are documented, they all have been considered and contributed to the development and directions of this Report.

This External School Review was conducted by Helen Tunney, Review Officer, Review, Improvement and Accountability Directorate and Deborah Hemming, Review Principal.

Policy compliance

The External School Review process includes verification by the Principal that key DECD policies are adhered to and implemented.

The Principal of Auburn Primary School has verified that the school is compliant in all applicable DECD policies other than item 5.5. The Principal advised action is being taken to comply with the following DECD policy:

Part 5 Safety: Item 5

The Principal is working through with staff the development of a policy regarding cyber safety. This will be finalised by the end of Term 1 2016.

When the school's actions achieve compliancy with DECD policy and procedures, the Principal must resubmit the Policy Compliance Checklist to the Education Director.

Implementation of the *DECD Student Attendance Policy* was checked specifically against documented evidence. The school was found to be compliant with this policy. The school attendance rate for 2015 was 90.5%, which is below the DECD target of 93%.

School context

Auburn Primary School caters for children from Reception to Year 7. The school is situated at the southern end of Clare Valley, 110 kilometres north of the Adelaide CBD, and 25 kilometres south of Clare, and is part of the Mid-North Clare Partnership. The enrolment is 50 students, and has been steady over the last 5 years. The school is classified as Category 5 on the DECD Index of Educational Disadvantage. The school's ICSEA score is 1026.

The school population includes 3.8% (2) Aboriginal students, no Students with Disabilities, 15% (7) students eligible for School Card assistance, and 1.9% (1) student with English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EALD) background.

The school Leadership Team consists of the Principal in the first year of her tenure at the school. The Principal currently teaches 0.3FTE, with a possibility of this increasing to 0.5FTE from Term 2. There has been disrupted leadership at the school, with 3 principals in 2015, and 8 principals in the last 10 years.

School Performance Overview

The External School Review process includes an analysis of school performance as measured against the DECD Standard of Educational Achievement (SEA).

In considering the data below, there needs to be some caution in making a judgement due to the low numbers represented in the student cohorts at the school.

Reading

In the early years, reading progress is monitored against Running Records. In 2015, 10 of 10 Year 1 and 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement under the DECD Standard of Educational Achievement (SEA). This result represents an improvement from the historic baseline average for both Year 1 and 2.

In 2015, the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 8 of 9 Year 3 students, 6 of 9 Year 5 students and 3 of 4 of Year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the DECD SEA. For Years 3 and 5, this result represents a decline from the historic baseline average. For Year 7, this result represents little or no change from the historic baseline average.

In 2015 Year 3, 5 and 7 NAPLAN Reading, the school achieved within the results of similar students across DECD schools.

In 2015 NAPLAN Reading, 6 Year 3 students, 1 Year 5 student, and 2 Year 7 students achieved in the top two bands.

For those students who achieved in the top two NAPLAN proficiency bands in reading, 1 student from Year 3 remains in the upper bands at Year 5 in 2015, and 2 students from Year 3 remain in the upper bands at Year 7 in 2015. For Years 3 to 5, this result represents a decline from the historic baseline average.

Numeracy

In 2015, the numeracy results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 8 of 9 Year 3 students, 6 of 9 Year 5 students and 4 of 4 Year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement under the DECD SEA. For Year 3, this result represents little or no change from the historic baseline average. For Year 5, this result represents a decline from the historic baseline average. For Year 7, this result represents an improvement from the historic baseline average.

In 2015 Year 3 and 5 NAPLAN Numeracy, the school achieved within the results of similar groups of students across DECD schools. In 2015 Year 7 NAPLAN Numeracy, the school achieved higher than the results of similar groups of students across DECD schools.

In 2015 NAPLAN Numeracy, 3 Year 3, no Year 5, and 2 Year 7 students achieved in the top two bands.

Two students from Year 3 remained in the upper bands at Year 7 in 2015. For Years 3 to 5, this result represents little or no change from the historic baseline average. For Years 3 to 7 this result represents an improvement from the historic baseline average.

Lines of Inquiry

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

Effective Teaching: **How effectively are teachers using the Australian Curriculum to support and improve student learning?**

To what extent is assessment used to inform curriculum planning and instruction?

School Community Partnerships: **To what extent does parent engagement with the school impact on student learning?**

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

At Auburn Primary School, teachers use *Australian Curriculum* content to structure their programs, and regularly access the Partnership Coordinator, Primary Australian Curriculum (CPAC) for support in the use of the *Australian Curriculum*. The Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden program (SAKG) is valued very highly by all groups of stakeholders. With the help of the CPAC, the SAKG program has been mapped within the *Australian Curriculum*. The SAKG program is now considered a signature program of the school, and it has become central to the identity of the school and its community. Students spend 6 weeks in Term 1, 8 weeks in Terms 2 and 3, and 7 weeks in Term 4, undergoing cooking lessons of 90 minutes in duration, and gardening lessons of 45 minutes duration. The transference of functional life skills from the SAKG program to home is very evident. The SAKG program has been extended to incorporate aquaponics and hydroponics. Families and School Support Officers (SSOs) believe the recently-introduced enterprise adjunct (school shop) to the SAKG program will be very positive for the school. Produce from the SAKG

program will be sold to the public.

The use of the *Australian Curriculum* at the school could be strengthened by the strategic use of *Australian Curriculum Achievement Standards* for reporting to students and their families. The inclusion of A-E grades in individual and whole-school tracking and monitoring of student learning would make student growth in the *Australian Curriculum* more explicit. Stronger teacher oversight of and input into the learning design of the valued SAKG and enterprise programs would enable these programs to contribute to students' learning more 'powerfully'. Using the rich palette of experiential contexts, in which students of Auburn Primary School are regularly immersed to design transformative learning tasks, would add much value to student achievement.

Direction 1

Raise student achievement across the curriculum through use of the *Australian Curriculum Achievement Standards* to design learning tasks that provide a coherent and engaging curriculum for students.

To what extent is assessment used to inform curriculum planning and instruction?

At Auburn Primary School reading and numeracy levels are strong at all year levels. The explicit teaching of reading is mapped across Reception to Year 7 and is being taught consistently from Reception to Year 4. Students are assessed regularly by teachers (in reading, numeracy and spelling) in-line with an agreed schedule. Data is mapped to track student achievement growth. Data is regularly analysed by teachers to identify next teaching points, and to differentiate instruction. Whole-school literacy and numeracy agreements are owned and living, providing consistency, transparency, and clarity that is valued by all stakeholders. These agreements are understood by the Auburn Primary School community as significant for staff succession planning.

Students value the well-targeted nature of teaching. 'Work is do-able but challenging. It is not too easy, just enough to make your head work'. Students appreciate the stringent routines and consistency of teaching and learning, and value the feedback they get from teachers about their school work and teacher expectations that they will persist until 'it's right'. Students notice when routine and differentiated challenge is missing from their classroom.

Teacher and SSO professional learning around 'powerful learning' could enhance teaching and learning at Auburn Primary School. It has the potential to raise the intellectual challenge of students and stretch teaching for student learning across the curriculum. Activating students as agents in their own and each other's learning, including in pedagogical and assessment design and decision-making, would deepen and enrich the quality of student learning and strengthen higher-band achievement and retention. The teaching of writing could be strengthened in the interests of higher student achievement, through the application of the same rigorous data analysis and planning cycles as are consistently applied to the teaching and learning of reading and numeracy.

Direction 2

Raise student achievement through engaging students in the analysis of their own learning data to stretch them intellectually and enable them to demonstrate higher achievement against *Australian Curriculum Achievement Standards*.

To what extent does parent engagement with the school impact on student learning?

Families have a strong sense of ownership at Auburn Primary School. They value the consistency and clarity of the teaching and learning agreements that are in place. Families have confidence that Auburn Primary School prepares their children well for high school assessments. Members of the Governing Council gave examples of how Auburn Primary School students consistently do well in the assessments used by high schools when students transition in Years 7 or 8.

The Governing Council knows the whole-school student achievement data, and values how student learning assessment is used for planning and differentiating instruction. There is genuine involvement of families at the school, and strong links between all groups of stakeholders. Auburn Primary School is a deeply-authentic school community. Issues of conflict related to student wellbeing are resolved quickly. Students value the 'strictness' and security of the school. The new Principal and her leadership is being experienced positively by staff, students and families.

The strong ownership of the school by families could be further enhanced and capitalised on by broadening and deepening the quality of governance at the school, especially in relation to the school improvement cycle. This would also serve to deepen the developing trust in, and relationship between, the Principal and the Governing Council.

Direction 3

Unite the school in a shared moral purpose and vision that is student-centred, aspirational, future-oriented and embedded in *Australian Curriculum Achievement Standards*.

OUTCOMES OF EXTERNAL SCHOOL REVIEW 2016

At Auburn Primary School good performance is evidenced by demonstrated growth in student reading and numeracy achievement. Student achievement data is used to inform decisions and actions at the individual student and class levels. The school works in partnership with parents and stakeholders, and the whole community has high expectations for students.

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

1. Raise student achievement across the curriculum through use of the *Australian Curriculum Achievement Standards* to design learning tasks that provide a coherent and engaging curriculum for students.
2. Raise student achievement through engaging students in the analysis of their own learning data to stretch them intellectually and enable them to demonstrate higher achievement against *Australian Curriculum Achievement Standards*.
3. Unite the school in a shared moral purpose and vision that is student-centred, aspirational, future-oriented and embedded in Australian Curriculum Achievement Standards.

Based on the school's current performance, Auburn Primary School will be externally reviewed again in 2020.



Tony Lunniss
DIRECTOR
REVIEW, IMPROVEMENT AND
ACCOUNTABILITY



Jayne Johnston
CHIEF EDUCATION OFFICER

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.



Catherine O'Dea
PRINCIPAL
AUBURN PRIMARY SCHOOL



Governing Council Chairperson