

Department for Education External School Review

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

Report for Lake Windemere B-7 School

Conducted in July 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 Greg Graham, Review Officer of the department's Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate and Michele Russell and Paul Harmer, 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)
 - Students
 - Teachers

School context

Lake Windemere B-7 School caters for students from birth to year 7. It is situated 27kms from the Adelaide CBD. The enrolment in 2020 is 515. Enrolment at the time of the previous review was 557. The local partnership is Orion.

The school has an ICSEA score of 929, and is classified as Category 2 on the Department for Education Index of Educational Disadvantage.

The school population includes 13% Aboriginal students, 15% students with disabilities, 19% students with English as an additional language or dialect (EALD) background, 3% children/young people in care and 54% of students eligible for School Card assistance.

The school leadership team consists of a principal in their 5th year of tenure, 3 B3 Leaders (early years responsible for the case management of reception to year 2 students and IESP applications, and daily management of the junior primary classes), Leader B3 Special Education and Inclusion (focusing on middle primary and special education needs and intervention), and a Leader B3 in Effective Teaching and Learning (focusing on data to inform teaching and management of upper primary). There are also 2 B1 Leaders (Reading Coordinator Curriculum Improvement), a B1 Student Wellbeing Leader and a B4 Leader (with responsibility for preschool).

There are 37.2 FTE teachers including 5 in the early years of their career and 11 Step 9 teachers.

The previous ESR or OTE directions were:

- Direction 1** **Develop and embed whole-school agreements about intellectual stretch and quality learning design in the interests of academically stretching all students against the SEA, and increasing and maintaining the numbers of students in the higher bands and achieving A and B grades.**
- Direction 2** **Strengthen and deepen teacher capacity to provide consistent quality teaching across the school by utilizing collective teacher skills and scaffolding the development of capabilities of all teachers in effectively designing and implementing pedagogies for engagement.**
- Direction 3** **Build teacher capacity to use data to design and evaluate learning.**
- Direction 4** **Strengthen the learning culture of the school through an agreed, evidence-based, consistent and collaborative approach to the management of student behaviours for learning and wellbeing.**

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

The current principal has been in the position for 5 years. There had been intentional actions to address the previous ESR directions, including the following:

The site has made a commitment to developing the concept of Balanced Readers to ensure students have the best opportunity to engage in all aspects of literacy.

Clear evidence-based agreements in Guided Reading, Running Records and phonics were collaboratively developed. All professional learning linked directly to the informing of agreements.

Accountability measures are in place to check that agreements are set up and effective through moderation of Running Records and the development of a Guided Reading planning template. The school is able to track and monitor student progress using data walls, electronic recording and student handover folders.

Teachers are using relevant data to inform teaching practice and planning. Individual student needs are analysed in Running Records and phonics. These are reflected in the planning template showing data-informed teaching points, moderated by teachers, and supported by the reading coordinator and the leadership team.

Teacher release and staff meeting time to collect and analyse data demonstrates commitment to effective use of data. Whole-school participation in rigorous professional learning around social and emotional literacies, trauma-informed practices and the Berry Street social learning program have been undertaken. This has led to the reform of school procedures around student behaviour management in the yard and class.

Some elements of the previous directions are still to be addressed and actioned in conjunction with the strategies identified in the school improvement plan and in specific supplementary action plans.

Lines of inquiry

Effective school improvement planning

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

The leadership team provides ample support and guidance for all staff, and regularly meets to review the progress of the curriculum in line with the site improvement plan (SIP) targets. Regular updates are discussed with teachers at staff and year-level meetings. The school refers to the core datasets of phonics and reading assessments as the basis for setting improvement targets and tracking intervention groups. Action plans and curriculum agreements explicitly support the SIP goals.

Strategic organisational structures were implemented across the school to address the learning priorities. The appointment of curriculum leaders, use of departmental support agencies, restructuring of classes, introduction of a literacy block and shared release timetabling, have provided immediate improvements in teaching of reading and phonics.

The foci for the challenge of practice in phonics and reading, and the school offering a comprehensive professional learning schedule in these subjects for all teachers and SSO personnel, is valued. Staff can recognise the level of accountability and acknowledge that changes in practice have been heightened due to SIP initiatives and their implementation. Take-up of these initiatives has been positive, with several staff commenting on how it has stimulated focus on teaching at a personal and collective level.

The school recognised the need to update their current methods in student wellbeing to address the changing focus for learning. Introduction of the Berry Street positive learning approach, along with interagency support, resulted in reductions of inappropriate behaviour. School community members commented on the significant change in attitude and responsibility of students and teachers towards teaching and learning.

The next steps for the school to consider include continuing to build teacher capacity and methods that reflect the SIP challenge of practice. Ensure teachers' literacy approach is consistently implemented before transferring the change process to other curriculum areas (eg mathematics). By strengthening the involvement of staff in the improvement cycle, the school will be in a position to ensure quality teaching could lead to improved student learning.

Direction 1 Strengthen the focus on individual student achievement by improving the effectiveness of teachers' pedagogical practices to achieve the SIP targets and success criteria.

Effective teaching and student learning

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

The principal reported that all of the school's work is strongly focused on evidence-based educational research, quality data and a number of models for implementation. The principal and teachers regularly cited phonics and guided reading approaches adopted as part of the challenge of practice to support their teaching. Curriculum focus on reading allowed teachers to sharpen their focus on intentional teaching. The concept of a 'balanced reader' and associated classroom strategies to support this notion are obvious and clearly articulated by teachers and students.

Learning tasks are diverse and appropriately designed according to their audience. Staff identified that the differentiated teaching strategies they use tended to have a bias towards students with specific learning needs and mid-level achievers. This was supported by the pedagogical survey results, indicating that 87% (50% medium – 37% high) of teachers rated their ability to differentiate the learning at a medium to high extent. Several teachers indicated that more work is needed with the higher-band students.

Implementation of formative assessment processes varied amongst the teachers, with the majority of staff referring to them to organise ability groups. Learning intentions are often used as part of the introductory approach for individual lessons, with some evidence of it being displayed in class. Use of success criteria is not widespread across the school, and linking it to learning intention was even less noticeable. The pedagogical survey indicated that 75% of teachers rated student understanding of the learning intention at a low to medium range.

Discussions and observations pointed out that involvement of students in co-designing their learning was not evident. Practices are pocketed throughout the school. Opportunities for students' agency in their learning has potential to teach them about stretch, persistence, resilience and understanding of progress data to give them ownership in their learning and build a culture of learning and high expectation.

Direction 2 **To meet the learning needs of all students, implement and embed approaches that consistently plan differentiated teaching that uses the formative assessment processes and feedback loop to heighten the impact on students' capabilities and self-drive to improve.**

Outcomes of the External School Review 2020

At Lake Windemere B-7 School, the influence of previous ESR directions is recognisable in the school's improvement. The school is effectively using improvement planning and monitoring processes to raise student achievement. Teacher and leader practice is positively impacted by effective systems that build capacity. The school is providing adequate conditions for student learning, while leadership provides strategic direction, planning and targeted interventions. Parents and teachers talked about 'community feel' and support offered to students as strengths of the school.

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

- Direction 1** **Strengthen the focus on individual student achievement by improving the effectiveness of teachers' pedagogical practices to achieve the SIP targets and success criteria.**
- Direction 2** **To meet the learning needs of all students, implement and embed approaches that consistently plan differentiated teaching that uses the formative assessment processes and feedback loop to heighten the impact on students' capabilities and self-drive to improve.**

Based on the school's current performance, Lake Windemere B-7 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, 27% of year 1 and 39% of year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. This result represents a decline from the historic baseline average, for both years 1 and 2. Between 2017 and 2019, the trend for year 1 has been downwards, from 51% to 27%.

In 2019, the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 76% of year 3 students, 59% of year 5 students and 64% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For years 3 and 7, this result represents an improvement and for year 5 a decline, from the historic baseline average.

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

In 2019, 28% of year 3, 6% of year 5 and 12% 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, 29%, or 2 out of 7 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5, and 44%, or 4 out of 9 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7.

Numeracy

In 2019, the numeracy results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 67% of year 3 students, 49% of year 5 students and 57% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For year 3, this represents an improvement and for years 5 and 7, little or no change from the historic baseline average.

For 2019, year 3 NAPLAN numeracy, the school is achieving within, and for years 5 and 7, below the results of similar groups of students across government schools.

In 2019, 16% of year 3, 2% of year 5 and 5% 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, 17%, or 1 out of 6 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.