

Department for Education External School Review

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

Report for Truro Primary School

Conducted in March 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 Liz Matheson, Review Officer of the department's Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate and Rob Smyth, 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
 - Parent groups
 - School Services Officers (SSOs)
 - Student representatives
 - Teachers.

School context

Truro Primary School caters for students from reception to year 7. It is situated 98 kms from the Adelaide CBD. The enrolment in 2021 is 41. Enrolment at the time of the previous review was 41. The local Partnership is Barossa Valley.

The school has a 2019 ICSEA score of 958 and is classified as Category 5 on the Department for Education Index of Educational Disadvantage.

The school population includes no Aboriginal students, no students with disabilities, no students with English as an additional language or dialect (EALD) background, no children/young people in care and no students eligible for School Card assistance.

The school leadership team consists of a Principal in the 2nd year of tenure.

The previous ESR or OTE directions were:

- Direction 1** **Prioritise professional learning that has had the greatest impact to sustain consistent pedagogies and application across the school.**
- Direction 2** **Increase the level of student voice and choice in learning opportunities to motivate and increase student achievement.**
- Direction 3** **Increase the engagement of staff and students in the use of authentic and formative feedback to develop understanding and purpose in learning and to enhance learning outcomes.**

What impact has the implementation of previous directions had on school improvement?
<p>There is significant evidence of effective and influential professional learning with the Principal and Partnership network through the Department's Learning Design, Assessment and Moderation strategy. Consistent foci and approaches across the school align with the Site Improvement Plan (SIP) goals. A school improvement culture was developed.</p> <p>A Student Parliament was established. The degree of student ownership for their learning was less evident, except in numeracy, where students could more clearly articulate what they know and don't know. The development of student ownership for their learning is a work-in-progress.</p>

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?

The Principal provides clear strategic and instructional leadership. The school has a strong learning improvement culture, evidenced by the commitment of staff to learn together.

The School Improvement Plan (SIP) is seen as a fluid, overarching plan, and it is everyone's responsibility to implement, review and refine. Goals were developed by a systematic, in-depth analysis of individual student achievement data and trends overtime. Governing Council members understand the goals, and regularly discuss the school's progress towards the targets.

Initially, the SIP's first challenge of practice was broad and lacked precision. Staff refined it to ensure greater clarity, with a specific focus on phonological awareness and mastery of phonics.

Planned actions for improvement are high-impact, research-based and clearly linked to the challenges of practice. All staff participated in professional learning conducted by Specific Learning Difficulties SA, which was influential in developing a shared understanding and collective ownership for current pedagogical practices. The common language used across the classes was noticeable.

There are effective processes using data to collectively monitor and track students' progress. Intervention strategies are well targeted and change according to assessed needs.

Review and evaluation processes (ie Steps 4 and 5 of the improvement cycle) have been developed over the past year, and were used as exemplars with the local Partnership. The school uses a traffic light system to indicate progress against each of the success criteria in the SIP. The 2020 evaluation was student-focused, and identified the successes, risks and next steps. For example, in August 2020, 80% of students were able to say the most common phoneme for all single-letter graphemes, and as a consequence, 3 (out of 15) students received targeted intervention during term 4 to achieve goal 1. Staff are also recording qualitative observations of what students can do and understand because of their teaching. The concept of evaluation of their impact is well-understood in this school.

Direction 1 In the context of frequent turn-over of staff, further develop processes to enhance staff consultation and ownership of the school's improvement plan.

Effective teaching and student learning

How effectively are teachers supporting students to improve their learning?

Staff are to be commended for their flexibility, as several teachers are new to the school, and others are teaching outside their previous year-level experience. They engaged in, and benefited from, professional learning, work with Consultants and their peers in the Partnership network, and performance feedback by the Principal. Curriculum mapping at the beginning of the year was a helpful process in getting everyone on the 'same page'. Consistency of practice across years levels was evident, and their knowledge of each student is extensive.

Teachers demonstrated self-reflection capacities, describing the changes they made to their teaching, including:

- more explicit teaching of phonemic skills
- modelling of strategies and more thoughtful questioning
- daily mathematical games to motivate students and consolidate skills
- a greater understanding that reading is a process and not a means to an end
- allowing students to teach other students.

A relatively new initiative in the Junior Primary class was goal-setting, informed by the teacher's formative assessment observations. Goals were short-term, in-context, and were changed as students mastered the skill or concept.

Teachers also reflected that the next challenge for the school is to improve the rigor of their task design to stretch students in multi-aged classes.

Learning intentions and success criteria were evident, although more precise success criteria and use of exemplars will further support students. Students' understanding of how to learn, and their ownership of their progress is not yet to a regular or embedded stage.

Direction 2 **Improve the rigor of task design to stretch and challenge students enabling multiple entry and exit points.**

Direction 3 **Explicitly share the language and thinking about learning to enable students to develop metacognitive strategies so that they can plan, monitor and assess their performance to a greater degree.**

Outcomes of the External School Review 2021

Teachers know their students, their achievement levels, and the next steps for learning well. The drive to learn and improve together was a characteristic of the school. Students are excited about their learning and are starting to see and talk about the progress they are making. This, in turn, has a positive impact on teachers' self-efficacy, their abilities and willingness to lift to the challenges of multi-aged classes, and to try new approaches. Staff are encouraged to maintain this level of self-reflection.

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

- Direction 1** In the context of frequent turn-over of staff, further develop processes to enhance staff consultation and ownership of the school's improvement plan.
- Direction 2** Improve the rigor of task design to stretch and challenge students enabling multiple entry and exit points.
- Direction 3** Explicitly share the language and thinking about learning to enable students to develop metacognitive strategies so that they can plan, monitor and assess their performance to a greater degree.

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



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Truro Primary School



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).

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. This is done for two reasons: to overcome the anomalies that may occur in any one year and to minimise the possibility of identifying individuals in any small cohort of students. The data below represents a summary of the aggregated data from Truro Primary School from 2015-2019.

Reading

In the early years, reading progress is monitored against Running Records. From 2016 to 2019, 67% of year 1 and 44% of year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA.

From 2015 to 2019, the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 68% of year 3 students, 78% of year 5 students, and 74% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA.

From 2015 to 2019, 26% of year 3, 22% of year 5, and 16% of year 7 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN reading bands.

Numeracy

From 2015 to 2019, the numeracy results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 53% of year 3 students, 52% of year 5 students, and 77% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA.

From 2015 to 2019, no year 3, 11% of year 5 and 11% of year 7 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN numeracy bands.

