Department for Education
External School Review

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

Report for Tintinara Area 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 Phil Garner, Review Officer of the department's Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate and Nathan Taylor, 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

Tintinara Area School caters for students from preschool to year 12. It is situated 190kms from the Adelaide CBD. The enrolment in 2021, as at the February census, is 144. Enrolment at the time of the previous review was 114. The local partnership is Coorong/Mallee.

The school has a 2020 ICSEA score of 1002 and is classified as Category 7 on the Department for Education Index of Educational Disadvantage.

The school population includes less than 5% Aboriginal students, 6 % students with disabilities, 0% students with English as an additional language or dialect (EALD) background, less than 5% children/young people in care and 32% of students eligible for School Card assistance.

The school leadership team consists of a Principal in their 1st year of tenure (acting in 2020), a Secondary Coordinator who focuses on VET and SACE and a Primary Coordinator who focuses on the early years.

There are 13 Teachers including 6 in the early years of their career and 3 Step 9 Teachers.

The previous ESR or OTE directions were:

Direction 1   Consolidate whole school coherence in evidence based pedagogical initiatives within reading, numeracy and well-being to improve learning achievement for all learners, particularly those who have the capacity to achieve in the higher bands.

Direction 2   Further establish the strategic use and analysis of learning data at the school, class and individual levels to inform planning, tracking, evaluating and reporting of school and student improvement.

Direction 3   Continue to build a culture of high expectation for learner achievement and wellbeing across the school through clearly defined whole-school strategies that are implemented coherently by all staff.

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

Direction 1: The school has focused on improving the quality of pedagogical practice to improve student outcomes. The focus on reading strategies in the early years has seen improvement in student achievement and the introduction of intervention strategies is catering for the learning needs of identified students. There is still work to be done on developing coherence and consistency of practice across the school and in catering for the learning needs of higher band students. Refer to lines of inquiry 2 and 3 in this report.

Direction 2: Teachers and leadership are using student achievement data to track and monitor learning overtime. However, the consistent use of data to identify and cater for the learning needs of individual students and influence the design of learning continues to be a work in progress for most teachers. Refer to lines of inquiry 1 and 3 in this report.

Direction 3: The leadership and staff have focused on developing a collaborative and trusting culture across the school with a strong focus on staff and student wellbeing. Student achievement data indicates continuing lower levels of high band achievement in some curriculum areas. Building a culture of high expectations continues to be a focus for whole-school improvement.

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?

Teachers have an informed understanding of the school improvement plan (SIP) priorities with improved engagement and collective ownership. They referred to the process as collaborative, transparent and engaging. Teachers are beginning to develop shared responsibility to achieve the improvement goals, build their capacity and increase student achievement.

There has been a concerted effort by leadership and staff to engage in professional learning and to introduce evidence-based strategies and programs that improve learning outcomes for students. Teacher professional development plans are clearly aligned to the SIP actions with self-reflection and leadership meetings related to professional progress and student improvement.

Providing students with opportunities to be involved in the development of the SIP and the ongoing review of the impact on their learning will enhance student voice. It will also add an interesting perspective from the point of view of the end user and provide a higher level of accountability for implementation of agreed actions.

While the school tracks and monitors student progress between assessments effectively it is the ongoing, deeper analysis of individual student achievement/progress data that will provide greater clarity of the learning needs of individual students. It is this level of data analysis that will enable all teachers to specifically design and target the learning for individual students. It will also enable effective ongoing school self-review and evaluation of the impact of the actions on student achievement. To make the distinction between 'big and little data' and to use them both effectively to track progress and provide for the individual learning needs of all students is an area for continued focus.

The school has a strong and embedded focus on the collaborative development and implementation of the SIP. Implementing an ongoing self-review and evaluation process will enable teachers to further improve the effectiveness of their monitoring processes and enable the adjustment of teaching and learning as and when required.

Direction 1 **Identify and provide for the learning needs of every student through the deep analysis of all student achievement data and continuous monitoring of the impact of teaching and learning on student achievement.**

Effective teaching and student learning

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

The panel noted some quality, explicit teaching in the early years. Most students could clearly articulate their learning, where they were and what was expected. Catering for the individual learning needs of students through the use of effective feedback strategies was evident in reading and mathematical investigations. Differentiation of learning was mostly by outcome with extra support being provided at point of need. Teachers regularly use manipulatives to support and differentiate the learning for their students.

Teachers of senior students are focused on supporting them in their learning and designing pathways that ensure they achieve South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) completion to secure gainful employment beyond school. Teachers go to extreme lengths to support senior students. There is a growing belief across the school to have a strategic focus on higher expectations and achievement that will enhance opportunities for students to attend high levels of education.

Most students believe that their teachers have high expectations of them however, in the majority of cases this was more related to teacher expectations around completing the task on time. Some teachers conduct pre and post testing with the expectation that students will improve between the assessments.

The use of learning intentions and success criteria is gaining momentum across the school, but some students have difficulty decoding and understanding what is required. While rubrics provide an indication of task requirements and what to include, it is important they are also supported by explicit teaching and quality examples of the completed product e.g. bump it up walls, I do, we do, you do strategies. Co-constructing the success criteria with students will provided greater understanding and ownership.,

The panel evidenced some quality teaching and learning across the school. However, there is evidence of variability of pedagogical practices that effectively support and challenge students in their learning. Leadership, teachers, and students will need to develop a collective understanding of what high expectations and challenge in teaching and learning looks like across the school and for all students.

Direction 2   **Improve student outcomes by developing and implementing a collective understanding of what high expectations and challenge means for every student in every classroom.**

Effective teaching and student learning

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

While teachers are becoming more familiar with unpacking student achievement data to identify areas for growth, formative feedback and assessment of student learning is variable across the school. Most students were unsure about where they are in their learning, their next steps and what they need to do to achieve them.

Senior school teachers work closely with students to individualise the learning and provide formative feedback at each step of the way through their learning. Students are provided with opportunities to engage effectively in self and peer assessment.

The assessment of student learning in the middle school has identified misconceptions and gaps in learning that should have been addressed in previous years. An opportunity exists to develop and implement a collaborative and strategic whole-school approach to ongoing student formative assessment and feedback.

Some formative written feedback was provided in the primary classes; however, it does not appear to be influencing student learning. Most students had not responded to the feedback or used it to improve their learning. Affirmation of learning in the form of stamps, stickers, ticks, and comments like 'well-done' is common practice. There is evidence of incomplete and unmarked learning tasks in some curriculum areas. Students require equity of access to a viable curriculum and formative feedback on how they are going in their learning and what they need to do next to improve.

The use of assessment data to influence the design of student learning is variable across the school. Strategic processes that map out a student's learning journey from foundation to year 10, and effective monitoring of individual achievement would ensure that gaps in learning are addressed at point of need and not continue to be of concern throughout their learning journey. Teachers engaging with the literacy and numeracy progressions in learning and providing high quality formative feedback has the potential to improve achievement for all students.

Direction 3   **Improve student achievement through the strategic implementation of high-quality formative feedback strategies that inform and guide students in their next steps in learning.**

Outcomes of the External School Review 2021

The leadership team has been working effectively to develop a sustainable culture of learning and improve collaboration between staff, student, governing council and parents. Communication and decision-making processes are clear, intentional, and inclusive. The school is now in a position to focus on developing a foundation to year 12 focus with consistency in pedagogical practice and sequenced learning that builds upon the skills, knowledge, and understandings of students as they progress through the school. With a dedicated and passionate teaching staff and a collective focus on high expectations the school is poised to make significant progress in improving outcomes for students.

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

Direction 1   **Identify and provide for the learning needs of every student through the deep analysis of all student achievement data and continuous monitoring of the impact of teaching and learning on student achievement.**

Direction 2   **Improve student outcomes by developing and implementing a collective understanding of what high expectations and challenge means for every student in every classroom.**

Direction 3   **Improve student achievement through the strategic implementation of high-quality formative feedback strategies that informs and guides students in their next steps in learning.**
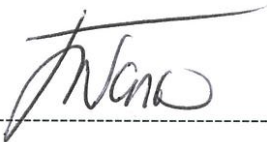
Based on the school's current performance, Tintinara Area School will be externally reviewed again in 2024.

Kerry Dollman

Director

Review, Improvement and Accountability

Anne Millard

Executive Director

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools

Jacqui Vandeleur

Principal

Tintinara Area 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).

Reading

In the early years reading progress is monitored against Running Records. In 2020 88% of year 1 and 70% of year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA.

In 2021 the reading results as measured by NAPLAN indicate that 90% of year 3 students, 71% of year 5 students, 57% of year 7 students and 100% of year 9 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For years 3 and 9 this result represents an improvement, for year 5 little or no change, and for year 7 a decline from the historic baseline average.

Between 2017 and 2021 the trend for year 3 has been upward from 73% to 90%

For 2021 year 3, 5, 7 and 9 NAPLAN reading the school is achieving within the results of similar students across government schools.

In 2021 40% of year 3, 35% of year 5, 14% of year 7 and 20% of year 9 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN reading bands. For year 3 this result represents little or no change from the historic baseline average.

For those students in 2021 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in reading 63% or 5 out of 8 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5, 50% or 1 out of 2 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7, 50% or 1 out of 2 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 9.

Numeracy

In 2021 the numeracy results as measured by NAPLAN indicate that 70% of year 3 students, 71% of year 5 students, 86% of year 7 students and 100% of year 9 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For year 3, this result represents a decline, for year 5 and 7 little or no change, and for year 9 an improvement from the historic baseline average.

For 2021 year 3, 5, 7 and 9 NAPLAN numeracy the school is achieving within the results of similar groups of students across government schools.

In 2021 30% of year 3, 18% of year 5, 0% of year 7 and 0% of year 9 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN numeracy bands. For year 3 this result represents little or no change from the historic baseline average.

For those students in 2021 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in numeracy 60% or 3 out of 5 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5, 0% or 0 out of 2 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7, 0% or 0 out of 1 student from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 9.

SACE

In terms of SACE completion in 2020 100% of students enrolled in February and 100% of those enrolled in October who had the potential to complete their SACE did go on to successfully achieve SACE. This result for October SACE completion represents little or no change from the historic baseline average.

For compulsory SACE Stage 1 and 2 subjects in 2020 100% of students successfully completed their Stage 1

Personal Learning Plan, 100% of students successfully completed their Stage 1 literacy units, 100% successfully completed their Stage 1 numeracy units and 100% successfully completed their Stage 2 Research Project.

For attempted Stage 2 SACE subjects in 2020 100% of grades achieved were at 'C-' level or higher, 43% of grades were at an 'A' level and 12% of grades were at a 'B' level. This result represents little or no change for the 'C-' level or higher grade, a decline for the 'A' level grade and a decline for the 'B' level grade from the historic baseline averages.