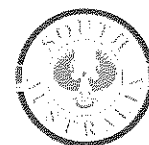


DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT  
OFFICE FOR EDUCATION AND EARLY CHILDHOOD

**EXTERNAL SCHOOL REVIEW**

**REPORT FOR HENDON PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Conducted in June 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 Tony Sullivan, Review Officer, Review, Improvement and Accountability Directorate and Gaynor Steele, 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 Hendon Primary School has verified that the school is compliant in all applicable DECD policies.

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 89.7%, which is below the DECD target of 93%.

### School context

Hendon Primary School is located 9 kilometres west of the Adelaide CBD, with nearly 420 students from Reception to Year 7. The school also has an enrolment of 60 students in the school-based preschool. A Regional Special Education class with 12 students from Years 3 to 7 is also located on-site.

The student cohort consists of approximately 53% of students eligible for School Card assistance, 11% of Students with Disabilities, 30% of students from Non-English Speaking Backgrounds, and 10% Aboriginal students. Hendon Primary School has a high level of cultural diversity. A transient rate of 30% in 2015 was identified as an emerging issue.

The school is classified as Category 3 on the DECD Index of Educational Disadvantage with an ICSEA value of 953.

The school leadership comprises a Principal in her fourth year of tenure at the school, a Deputy Principal and four Coordinators.

### School Performance Overview

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

#### Reading

In the early years, reading is monitored against Running Records. In 2015, 57% of Year 1 and 58% of Year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement under the DECD Standard of Educational Achievement (SEA). The Year 1 and 2 results are within the school's historic baseline average.

In 2015, the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 83% of Year 3 students, 59% of Year 5 students, and 73% of Year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement under the DECD SEA. For Year 3, the results are higher than the school's historic baseline average. For Years 5 and 7, the results are within the school's historic baseline average.

From 2013 to 2015, the NAPLAN Reading results for Year 3 (from 68% in 2013 to 83% in 2015) and Year 7 (from 63% in 2013 to 73% in 2015), show an upward trend pattern against the SEA. For Year 5, there is a downward trend evident, from 83% (2013) to 58% (2015) at SEA.

For 2015 Year 3, 5 and 7 NAPLAN Reading, the school is achieving within the average results of similar students across the DECD system.

In 2015, 41% of Year 3, 19% of Year 5 and 18% of Year 7 students achieved in the top two NAPLAN Reading bands. For Year 3, this result is higher than the school's historic baseline average.

Of the 11 students who achieved in the top two NAPLAN proficiency bands in reading at Year 3 (2013),

taking into account arrivals and departures, 6 students remained in the upper bands at Year 5 in 2015. This result shows a decline compared to the school's historic baseline average. Of the 16 students in the top two bands at Year 3 (2011), taking into account arrivals and departures, 6 remained in the upper bands at Year 7 in 2015. This result is within the school's historic baseline average.

#### Numeracy

In 2015, the numeracy results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 67% of Year 3 students, 72% of Year 5 students and 71% of Year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement under the DECD SEA. For Years 3 and 7, this result shows little or no change compared to the school's historic baseline average. For Year 5, the result is above the school's historic baseline average.

From 2013 to 2015, in Year 5, there has been an upward trend from 63% to 72%.

In 2015 Year 3, 5 and 7 NAPLAN Numeracy, the school is achieving within the average results of similar students across the DECD system.

In 2015, 22% of Year 3, 15% of Year 5 and 13% of Year 7 students achieved in the top two NAPLAN Numeracy bands. For Year 3, this result is above the school's historic baseline average.

Of the 8 students who achieved in the top two NAPLAN proficiency bands in Year 3 Numeracy in 2013, taking into account arrivals and departures, 6 students remained in the top two bands at Year 5 in 2015. This result is within the range compared to the school's historic baseline average. Of the 10 students in the top two bands at Year 3 in 2011, taking into account arrivals and departures, 4 students remained in the upper bands at Year 7 in 2015. This result is below the school's historic baseline average.

The Leadership Team presented a scope of the school's learning journey over time. Self-review of school performance is undertaken by a School Review Team, with directions and decisions described as data-informed. The school has the capacity to use and analyse data from the school level to individual student level, to monitor and track performance as it relates to improved student learning.

The Leadership Team described the curriculum and pedagogical approaches that are being implemented across the school to engage students at a deeper level within the learning program, particularly as they relate to Literacy and Numeracy. This work is accompanied by the development of Growth Mindsets and 'You Can Do It' concepts that encourage positive attitudes and dispositions for learning.

As a result of the above data and the Leadership Team's presentation, the Review Panel explored the Lines of Inquiry as per below.

#### Lines of Inquiry

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

Student Learning:	To what extent are students engaged and intellectually challenged in their learning?
Effective Teaching:	How effectively are teachers using DECD pedagogical frameworks to guide learning design and teaching practice?
Effective Leadership:	To what extent are the school's professional learning and performance and development processes effective in building teacher capacity?

**To what extent are students engaged and intellectually challenged in their learning?**

Through meeting with students, talking to them about their school and observing them in their classrooms, the Review Panel collected evidence of sound student engagement in the many learning opportunities presented at the school. The students spoke positively of their connection with peers and teachers at the school. They recounted a variety of structures and activities that engage them in the 'life' of the school, including Performing Arts, Wakakirri, rock band, choirs (junior, middle and senior), SRC, 'Passports for Independence', Homework Hub, PMA Maths Challenge and Peer Mediators. One staff member encapsulated a view captured through staff and parent interviews: "We don't give up. We are a team and you don't do it without a team."

It was evident through documentation, class observations and staff meeting that the staff are working diligently to challenge all students in their learning. For example, in maths/numeracy, there was a demonstrated and intentional approach to plan and deliver the four proficiencies described in the Australian Curriculum. The Coordinator and staff are commended for their approach to this work, and are encouraged to plan and embed fluency, reasoning, understanding and problem-solving into learning design in other areas of the curriculum.

There was some presented evidence through class observations of teachers using 'problematised' maths scenarios to engage all students in thinking about the application of maths concepts and strategies from their individual perspectives. When asked about this approach in maths, one student commented: "We look for clues when we solve problems." 'Mental routines' were evident in some classes as a strategy to consolidate maths facts to a level of automaticity and recall, to allow students time to engage in higher-level thinking. A small group of students presented to the Review Panel about their recent experience to explore maths used in two local businesses – Crash Repair and Plumbing. Students described how this opportunity made the learning of mathematics more relevant to their lives.

The reading results for the school indicate an upward trend of improved reading over time, particularly by Year 3. The use of data to target support and intervention, delivery of a structured phonics program (Jolly Phonics), implementation of a consistent and targeted reading program (Guided Reading) inclusive of explicit teaching, and the involvement of parent and SSO support for levelled groups are delivering improved outcomes. These aspects were verified in class observations and staff and parent interviews.

Students, parents and staff confirmed the involvement of students in recent face-to-face reporting to parents. Some students had discussed goals and 'next steps' for improvement in these meetings. Some students were provided with scaffolds to support their role in these three-way interviews. Parents had confirmed that they received information about their child's performance against the A–E standard in the Term 2 report. Some parents were able to articulate that the 'C' grade was where most students should be when meeting the year-level standard.

Parents, staff and students described the strength of the school as its culture of 'not giving up' on students. Parents used the term 'inclusive' when asked to describe it in one word. Parents confirmed that the school supported students culturally, socially and emotionally, in an effort to maximize their engagement.

The Review Panel verified that the school was working effectively to engage students in their school experiences. The panel also verified the positive intent by staff to apply their professional learning towards improving their teaching practices. What emerged through teacher, parent and student conversations, as well as classroom observations, was somewhat limited in the extent of consistency across the school. The strategic delivery of agreed teaching practices to support learning continuity for students should be considered further, taking into consideration some of the presenting class complexity.

**Direction 1**

**Strategically embed the agreed and defined pedagogical approaches that deliver 'challenge and stretch' for all learners across the school to a high level of consistency in all classes.**

How effectively are teachers using DECD pedagogical frameworks to guide learning design and teaching practice?

A number of key school documents clearly articulate the expected learning design and teaching practices that align strategically with DECD expectations. The school's Site Improvement Plan (SIP), Maths/Numeracy Agreement, Whole-School Teaching and Learning Agreements 2016, Leading Numeracy Improvement 2016 and Curriculum Statements of Practice, provided evidence of the explicitness of expectations in the design and delivery of learning at Hendon Primary School.

The teachers are working diligently to design and deliver the learning program through agreed pedagogical approaches that align with the Teaching for Effective Learning Framework (TfEL) and Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF). The school has worked effectively to engage students within the school through a 'culture' that creates safe and supportive conditions for learning. 'You Can Do It', 'Powerful Learners' and 'Growth Mindsets' are evident across the school in student and staff language, classroom displays and student goal-setting documentation.

Teaching staff provided students with an opportunity for feedback to them through a TfEL engagement survey about their teaching approaches. This has provided important reflection and discussion points about their own individual practice. Teachers have also conducted student surveys to gather their attitudes about maths/numeracy learning. These approaches were verified in staff and student meetings and in documented survey information.

Through the influence of the Literacy and Maths/Numeracy Coordinators, there are a number of evident approaches that are in the process of being implemented across the school. These include (but are not limited to): Guided Reading; Jolly Phonics, Jolly Grammar, Writing text structures/features, problem-solving strategies, learning intentions and success criteria. Conversations and documentation from staff, student meetings and classroom observations verified that the rate and scope of implementation of agreed practices is still 'work in progress'.

Staff confirmed their message at a staff meeting to 'achieve a high level of consistency' in their teaching practices across the school to ensure successful outcomes for all students. For example, the Review Panel verified two processes used across some classes at the school to provide challenge in learning. In writing, text features were expanded through a process called 'Bump it Up', and in maths, expanded thinking opportunities were offered through a design called 'Sting in the Tail'. Both provided similar opportunities for students to pursue higher level challenges in each aspect of learning. These practices are commended for the intended purpose of 'stretching' student thinking.

It was verified in staff and Leadership Team conversations that some learning teams and staff within teams work in more open and collaborative ways than others. Some classroom observations confirmed high-level collaboration and connected classroom practices; for example, Guided Reading in the early years. In 2016, the school classroom structure (single year levels) has been designed to support the delivery of the Australian Curriculum to ensure a connected curriculum provision. It is important that curriculum and pedagogical coherence happens not only within learning teams but also across the year level structures. This aspect was verified through staff conversations and through written feedback from a staff meeting.

Staff integrity, commitment and energy to implement change aligned to the SIP, and identified improvement strategies, were evident throughout the review. Through the staff meeting process, the teachers expressed a shared view to develop a 'common language or vocabulary' for learning through the Learning Team structure that exists within the school. A member of one learning team commented: "The push in our team is to use the same language."

This learning 'discourse', a term used by the school, will need strategic agreement and delivery across all sections of the school to promulgate a whole-school approach. Strategic leadership processes should further build upon the evident staff capacity to embed and consolidate agreed pedagogical approaches through staff collaborative endeavour. A common message amongst staff in support of successful implementation of the improvement agenda was 'to narrow the focus.'

**Direction 2**

**Expand opportunities for staff to work collaboratively to deprivatise teaching practice within the evident culture of trust, sharing and developing 'growth mindsets'.**

To what extent are the school's professional learning and performance and development processes effective in building teacher capacity?

There was verified evidence of a high level of investment by the school in staff professional learning. The staff actively engaged in this learning with the positive intent of delivering the strategies and outcomes explicit in the SIP. The staff professional learning is scheduled, planned and undertaken at a number of levels external to the school and within the school's strategic structure. This was verified through documentation, staff interviews and observation (of a staff meeting) by the Review Panel.

Staff professional learning occurs at Partnership, network, whole-school, learning team and individual levels. The school focus with learning improvement is in the areas of writing and maths/numeracy. These priorities align with DECD improvement work, and emerged through data analysis undertaken by the Leadership Team, School Planning Committee and staff at the school. The school strategic structures, processes and leadership personnel decide, design and deliver staff professional learning to facilitate the curriculum and pedagogical improvement in writing and maths. External facilitators are used to deliver high level expertise to supplement the capacity of staff evident within the school. These aspects were evident through schedules, journals, meeting minutes, staff and parent meetings.

Numeracy learning has become a recent emergent priority within the school, based on the school's determination against the various data sets analysed. A Coordinator position was created to lead school improvement in this area. Her leadership and expertise in curriculum and pedagogical improvement is highly valued by staff. She works collaboratively with each of the learning teams, inclusive of staff from the school-based preschool to Year 7. The value of this work was evident in staff conversations, staff meeting, team meeting notes and other documentation.

To impact on maths/numeracy outcomes at the school, the Coordinator, in collaboration with staff representatives, is leading the delivery of agreed and defined practices across all levels of schooling. A reinforcement of these required approaches is evident in documentation provided to the panel. The Preschool Director attends staff meetings to support curriculum continuity in maths between preschool and the Foundation Year at school. Documentation from the preschool verified a focus on numeracy indicators being observed, as a key component of early years monitoring and planning processes.

To ensure the effective implementation of these agreed teaching strategies to bring about improvement in learning outcomes over time, the school Leadership Team require staff to develop personal performance plans. Exemplars of these plans were provided to the Review Panel. Staff professionalism in defining their work priorities, key strategies and success indicators, in line with the school priorities, is acknowledged. Personal written feedback from the Leadership Team was provided to staff against these plans and verified through documentation.

The Leadership Team members who 'line manage' staff, confirmed that performance and development discussions and written documented feedback largely occurs through structured meetings – either individually or through Learning Teams. Whilst it was verified through meetings with staff that the Leadership Team is open, approachable and participate in class walkthroughs, they indicated that alignment of agreed teaching strategies and approaches could be further enhanced through a variety of models of focused classroom observations.

### **Direction 3**

**Support the delivery of consistent and connected curriculum and pedagogical approaches through performance and development strategies that encompass focused classroom observations and formative feedback for staff.**

### OUTCOMES OF EXTERNAL SCHOOL REVIEW 2016

Hendon Primary School is demonstrating growth in student achievement over time. An improvement culture exists within the school and this is supported through effective self-review processes using multiple measures of data. The teachers display a commitment to deliver higher level learning outcomes through effective teaching practices being applied across all sections of the school.

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

1. Strategically embed the agreed and defined pedagogical approaches that deliver 'challenge and stretch' for all learners across the school to a high level of consistency in all classes.
2. Expand opportunities for staff to work collaboratively to deprivatise teaching practice within the evident culture of trust, sharing and developing 'growth mindsets'.
3. Support the delivery of consistent and connected curriculum and pedagogical approaches through performance and development strategies that encompass focused classroom observations and formative feedback for staff.

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

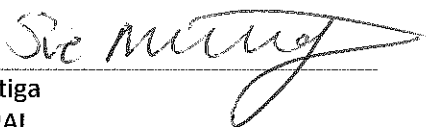


Tony Lunniss  
DIRECTOR  
REVIEW, IMPROVEMENT AND  
ACCOUNTABILITY

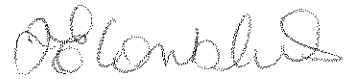


Jayne Johnston  
CHIEF EDUCATION OFFICER

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.



Sue Mittiga  
PRINCIPAL  
HENDON PRIMARY SCHOOL



Governing Council Chairperson