

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

EXTERNAL SCHOOL REVIEW

REPORT FOR KLEMZIG PRIMARY SCHOOL

Conducted in July 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 Liz Matheson, Review Officer, Review, Improvement and Accountability Directorate, Bryan Rotherham and Margot McDougal, Review Principals.

Policy compliance

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

The Principal of Klemzig Primary School has verified that the school is compliant with all applicable DECD policies.

Implementation of the *DECD Student Attendance Policy* was checked specifically against documented evidence. The school was found to be working compliant with this policy.

The school attendance rate for 2015 was 90% which is below the DECD target of 93%.

School context

Klemzig Primary School caters for students from Reception to Year 7, including having the largest Centre for Hearing Impairment (CHI) in South Australia. There are 8 classes, and most of these operate as bilingual classes in Auslan and spoken English. There is an expectation that, as the CHI enrolments grow, all classes will become entirely bilingual. The school has an Auslan bilingual preschool, which is the only preschool for the deaf in the state, and has operated at maximum numbers for the past 2 years.

The enrolment in 2016 is 192 students. The school is classified as Category 4 on the DECD Index of Educational Disadvantage. The school's ICSEA score is 1008. The local ECD Partnership is Torrens. The school is situated 9kms north-east of the Adelaide CBD. Students meeting the CHI criteria can opt to travel to school by taxi.

Almost one in four students (22%) has a verified disability. There is a significant number of students with speech and language disabilities. The school has an in-house Speech Pathologist. The school population includes 8 Aboriginal students and 55% of students are of English as an Additional Language or Dialect background. There are currently 6 students under the Guardianship of the Minister.

The school Leadership Team consists of a Principal in the 1st year of her tenure at the school, a Deputy Principal, 2 Assistant Principals (CHI and a School Counsellor) and a Special Education Coordinator. All leaders, except the School Counsellor, are newly appointed to the school in 2016. A new Finance Officer was appointed at the beginning of Term 2, 2016. There has been a 51% change of staff within the CHI in Term 1 2016.

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 progress is monitored against Running Records. In 2015, 39% of Year 1 and 53% of Year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement under the DECD Standard of Educational Achievement (SEA). This result represents a decline in Year 1 from the historic baseline average, and a 3-year downward trend. The Year 2 result also represents a decline against the historic trend.

In 2015, the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 82% of Year 3, 55% of Year 5, and 50% of Year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement under the DECD SEA. For Year 3, this result represented an improvement against the historic average. For Years 5 and 7, this result represented little or no improvement. It is noted that 5 of 22 (23%) Year 5 students, and 9 of 24 students (38%) in Year 7 did

not participate in the test.

For Year 5, there is a downward trend from 83% in 2013 to 55% in 2015.

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

In 2015, 10 Year 3 (46%), 4 Year 5 (18%) and 2 Year 7 (8%) students achieved in the top two NAPLAN Reading bands. For Year 3, this result represents an improvement in relation to the historic baseline average.

For those students who achieved in the top two NAPLAN proficiency bands in reading, 60%, or 3 of 5 students from Year 3, remained in the upper bands at Year 5 in 2015. This result represented an improvement from the historic average. In 2015, 33%, or 1 of 3 students from Year 3, remained in the upper bands at Year 7 in 2015. This result represent little or no improvement.

Numeracy

In 2015, the numeracy results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 82% of Year 3 students, 41% of Year 5 students, and 29% of Year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement under the DECD SEA. For Years 3 and 5, this result represented an improvement in relation to the historic average. In Year 7, the result showed little or no improvement in relation to the historical average.

For 2015 Year 3 NAPLAN Numeracy, the school achieved results higher than similar students across DECD schools. For Year 5 and 7 NAPLAN Numeracy, the school is achieving below the range of the results of similar students across DECD schools.

In 2015, 4 of 22 (18%) Year 3 students, 5 of 22 (23%) Year 5 students, and 1 of 24 (4%) Year 7 students, achieved in the top two NAPLAN Numeracy bands. For Year 3, this result represents an improvement from the historic baseline average.

For those students who achieved in the top two NAPLAN proficiency bands in numeracy, 67%, or 2 of 3 students from Year 3, remained in the upper bands at Year 5 in 2015. This result represented an improvement from the historic baseline average. From Year 3 to 7, 0 of 1 student remained in the upper bands. It is noted that 4 out of 5 students who were in upper bands in Year 3 numeracy in 2011 had left the school by Year 7 in 2015.

Lines of Inquiry

During the review process, the panel focused on 3 key areas from the External School Review Framework:

Effective Leadership: To what extent is a positive and focused approach to improvement and change evident?

Effective Teaching: How effectively are teachers supporting students in their learning?

School Community Partnerships: How authentic is the influence of students on their learning and throughout the school?

To what extent is a positive and focused approach to improvement and change evident?

Almost all of the Leadership Team was appointed to Klemzig Primary School at the beginning of 2016. The team led an internal review to determine where they were currently, where did they want to be and how would they get there: the *what, so what and now what* questions. This process developed and articulated an improvement cycle. It provided an opportunity to develop staff members' understanding that improvement needs to be deeper, to target learning in a more focused way, and it is not a 'tick-off' process. Most importantly, the key message to staff was that improvement depends on staff enacting the

strategies within the classroom in a continuous way.

The internal review process involved a comprehensive analysis of student achievement and engagement, and identified gender and cohort trends. The extent to which students are engaged with their learning was measured, for the first time, using the DECD Teaching for Effective Learning compass tool. It enabled the school to triangulate data and identify reform and change priorities.

The staff tracked the achievement of students defined as high-achieving, and found that specific cohorts of students dropped out of the high-achievement category as they progressed through their schooling. It was also noted there was a high level of transience with a significant number of the high achievers leaving the school. This finding confirms the DECD School Performance Report, which states that 2 out of a total of 5 students in the higher bands left Klemzig Primary School between Year 3 in 2013 and Year 5 in 2015; 4 out of 5 students left between Year 3 in 2011 and Year 7 in 2015. This appears to be a constant pattern and the school is keen to 'turn the tide.'

In relation to the achievement and growth of learners at risk, the internal review concluded that deaf students, Students with Disabilities and students in the beginning or emergent phase of proficiency in English, were learners at risk of not making sufficient progress. The internal review found that students with learning difficulties have different needs than Students with Disabilities, and these two groups need to be supported in different ways.

From this deep and triangulated data analysis, the school was able to draw conclusions about priority needs and strategic directions. For example, the school found that boys' achievement in mathematics was lower than girls, even though the boys were more engaged than the girls. This finding caused staff to reflect on how they were teaching.

A Strategic Plan 2016-2018 has been developed. As key stakeholders, students, through the Junior Leadership Group, helped shape the priorities and plan. They are viewed as partners in the enactment of the plan and their involvement is ongoing. The strategies listed in the Plan describe what the school will do differently to create change. There are clear, measurable targets, and there are specific outcomes for different cohorts of students. A parent-friendly version of the SIP has been published and distributed. The performance and development processes are aligned with the SIP, so that teachers are supported in making changes to their practice.

For many years Klemzig Primary School has been known as a caring, supportive school. The vision was to support students to reach their potential. The new Leadership Team wants to *put learners' intellectual challenge and ethical engagement at the heart of everything we do*. The Review Panel asked members of Governing Council, parents and staff members their opinion about this significant change in focus. Many described it as timely, and acknowledged the need for greater rigour and stretch. Members of the school's deaf community saw it as potentially more empowering of all children, with the expectation that with Auslan bilingualism and quality support, deaf children can rise to intellectual challenges and achieve as well as any other children.

There is a perception that Klemzig Primary School is a school for students with 'special needs'. There appears to be a mismatch between what the school wants to achieve and the broader understanding of the school's role and purpose. The Governing Council expressed concern about this perception and their belief that it is limiting enrolments from within the neighbourhood. They saw the school's commitment to bilingualism as innovative and supportive of deaf children, but also as an approach that has academic and personal spin-offs for hearing children. They were able to provide anecdotal stories to illustrate this view.

The Leadership Team wants to maintain the school as a supportive bilingual environment, but also build a view of the school in which learning is seen as a 'productive struggle', motivating and challenging. To achieve this vision, the broader perception of the school needs to be refocused onto learning and improvement.

Direction 1

To support the school to realise its vision of intellectual stretch and ethical engagement at its heart, work with the Governing Council, local Partnership and broader community to transform the current perception of the school.

How effectively are teachers supporting students in their learning?

At the beginning of 2016 students were asked to describe the school in 3 words. These were put together into a Wordle. The words that stood out are: fun, helpful, boring, friends and Auslan. *Learning* appeared to be small and insignificant in the minds of the students.

An engagement rubric was developed and used to elicit students' perceptions of their experiences of the learning process. Most of the upper primary students were not clear about what they were being asked to do or learn about. Only two students could see applications in their learning to the real world and 50% could see links to new learning, but at the same level, not as a challenge. This result was almost the same as the response provided by middle and junior primary students.

In using the DECD TfEL compass the school found that girls and Aboriginal students experienced less connection between learning experiences and their lives than other groups. This result suggests that their interests and the amount of attention they receive may be subsumed by the more dominant groups within the class. Leaders told the Review Panel that this data was very revealing for teachers.

The Review Panel asked teachers to reflect on a unit of work from Term 2 and to rate their pedagogies. The survey results showed that most teachers see their strengths in using inquiry methods, engaging students in the learning process and in being clear about the learning intentions. Many teachers reflected they were surprised at students' interest and enthusiasm about the topic and level of determination and engagement. The majority rated themselves lower in explaining the learning intentions to students, in checking for understanding during the learning process, involving students in co-constructing their learning or in the task design to stretch students' thinking.

Older students think the "teaching is changing". There are less stencils and less emphasis on neatness as being the most important attribute. Students from one class described a new rule, which was the teacher "can only talk for 15 minutes and then we have to do the task". They were helping their teacher to stick to this rule and found they tuned in more carefully as their teacher explained or modelled the key point of the lesson.

Earlier in the year, a group of leaders within the DECD Partnership conducted an instructional round at Klemzig Primary School, to identify the strengths and challenges in teachers' pedagogical practices. They found that students were involved in hands-on learning, partner or group work, there was integration of learning areas, clear assessment criteria and a level of student choice. They identified challenges for the school in task design, clarity of learning intent and purpose, predominance of teacher direction and insufficient learning differentiation to meet the varied needs of students.

The Review Panel was confident that most teachers are 'on board' and that, with time and support, are willing and ready to embrace this new learning.

Direction 2

To effectively support and challenge students, engage with the DECD Teaching for Effective Learning Framework (TfEL), to shape and guide changes in pedagogical practices, so that they become deeply embedded into daily practice.

Klemzig Primary School has a large number of deaf students, students with verified disabilities, students who are in the beginning stages of learning English and students who have specific learning difficulties. Students and parents report the school is very inclusive and are proud of the bilingual approach. As stated earlier in this report, there are also students who need to be provided with greater intellectual challenge. Within every class there are varied learning needs, interests and prior experiences. The challenge for teachers is to plan and provide differentiated learning experiences to support students to be able to access the curriculum.

The school has changed the way in which it supports students with disabilities through the Negotiated Education Planning processes. The process should be one of goal-setting, review and improvement planning, rather than be seen as a compliance activity. A Coordinator in Special Education has been appointed to support teachers to be able to do this more effectively. This year, School Service Officers (SSOs) are working in classrooms to support students with specific learning difficulties. This requires the use of targeted assessment and data to more clearly diagnose the learning difficulty and the type of

learning activities that will help the students. This change of practice is based on the recognition that support needs to be connected to, and add value to, classroom learning.

As stated above, there is a relatively high rate of transience at Klemzig Primary School. Teachers also talked about the challenge of quickly finding out what this group of students can do and what their learning needs are. It is also important that opportunities are provided for them to make friends, and to work with other students to learn about the culture, routines and expectations of the school. New students and families reported that the school needs to be commended for making people feel welcome and included.

The team that conducted the Instructional Rounds found that there needed to be greater learning differentiation. For teachers to be able to do this effectively they need to understand the outcomes and intentions they are aiming for the students to achieve. It requires them to use the Australian Curriculum to scan ahead, and then to plan how they are going to scaffold and tailor the learning so that all students can progress towards, or engage deeper with, the Achievement Standard levels. The Review Panel found there is some confusion about what this means in practice and the importance of using achievement data for planning.

Direction 3

To provide students with tailored and targeted learning, work with teachers to develop a common understanding of learning differentiation and to use data effectively for their planning.

How authentic is the influence of students on their learning and throughout the school?

The Review Panel spoke to groups of students from Years 3 to 7. They indicated they knew they were learning when they “get all the questions right”, when they “get another sheet to do”, by comparing their work from Term 2 with Term 1, and the “teacher smiles at us”. They were asked what feedback they received on their work and how did they know what and how to improve. Students stated they get comments like *good job, needs to be neater, independent*, or a grade or mark. Assessment rubrics were seen as helpful in giving students a clue about what is expected to do to receive an A or a C. Many teachers give students a chance to learn with other students: “They mix us up, deaf kids and hearing kids, and we find this helps us to learn”.

One of the 3 priorities on the school’s Strategic Plan seeks to develop students’ growth mindsets about themselves as learners and to engage them in intellectually challenging learning. In their reflections on Term 2, a few teachers observed the students “quickly step back and let adults do things”. They wait to be rescued and are experts at “learned helplessness”. Students and teachers indicated to the Review Panel that the level of student influence in constructing the learning is low.

Apart from the Junior Leadership Group and in a few classes, students are not yet seen, or behave, as partners in the learning process. Students’ executive functions, such as flexible thinking, impulse control and working memory, are not yet intentionally and systematically developed. It will require a significant change in teachers’ practices and mindsets, as well as students’ executive functions, to engage in learning as a ‘productive struggle’, as a challenge to achieve the desired outcomes in the Strategic Plan.

Direction 4

To support students to improve their executive functions, develop and utilise pedagogies, which enable greater student influence in learning and assessment processes within and beyond their classrooms.

OUTCOMES OF EXTERNAL SCHOOL REVIEW 2016

Klemzig Primary School is using quantitative and qualitative data to inform its strategic directions and decisions. The school has a highly developed approach to improvement as a cyclic review, evaluate, plan, enact and review process. The school has begun to engage with the DECD Teaching for Effective Learning framework and teachers have shown a willingness to try pedagogical shifts in their practices.

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

1. To support the school to realise its vision of intellectual stretch and ethical engagement at its heart, work with the Governing Council, local Partnership and broader community to transform the current perception of the school.
2. To effectively support and challenge students, engage with the DECD Teaching for Effective Learning Framework (TfEL), to shape and guide changes in pedagogical practices, so that they become deeply embedded into daily practice.
3. To provide students with tailored and targeted learning, work with teachers to develop a common understanding of learning differentiation and to use data effectively for their planning.
4. To support students to improve their executive functions, develop and utilise pedagogies, which enable greater student influence in learning and assessment processes within and beyond their classrooms.

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



Tony Lunniss
DIRECTOR
REVIEW, IMPROVEMENT AND
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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.

Michele Smith
PRINCIPAL
KLEMZIG PRIMARY SCHOOL

Governing Council Chairperson