

# Department for Education External School Review

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

## Report for Eastern Fleurieu R-12 School

Conducted in November 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 Kathryn Entwistle, Review Officer of the department's Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate and Brenton Conradi, Ray Marino and Joe Priolo, 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
- Viewing archival videos
- Discussions with:
  - Governing Council representatives
  - Leaders
  - Parent groups
  - School Services Officers (SSOs)
  - Student groups
  - Teachers

## School context

Eastern Fleurieu R-12 School caters for students from reception to year 12. It is a multi-campus school, with 4 primary campuses, in Strathalbyn, Milang, Langhorne Creek and Ashbourne and one secondary campus in Strathalbyn. All the sites are situated approximately 54kms south-east of Adelaide in and around the town of Strathalbyn. The enrolment in 2020 is 1526, which is a decrease from 1561 students in 2019. The school is classified as category 6 on the Department for Education Index of Educational Disadvantage. The school's ICSEA score is 995, and the local partnership is Fleurieu.

The school population includes 5% Aboriginal students, 23% students with disabilities, 28% families receiving school card assistance, less than 6 students with English as an additional language or dialect and 2% children/young people in care. In 2020, there are 77 students enrolled in FLO programs, with 41 located in an off-campus facility.

The school leadership team consists of:

- principal in his 3<sup>rd</sup> year of a seven-year tenure
- director of the reception to year 6 campuses
- director of the year 7 to 12 campus
- three 'heads of campus': for Milang, Langhorne Creek and Ashbourne R-6 campuses
- four B3 assistant principals, responsible for primary years, secondary years, curriculum and pedagogy
- ten B2 leaders responsible for curriculum and pedagogical leadership. This includes the 3 Heads of Campus
- five B1 leaders, 4 of whom are responsible for wellbeing/students at risk and 1 for innovative pedagogies and deep learning.

There is a 109 FTE allocation filled by 116 teaching staff, and 78 ancillary staff employed at the school.

### The previous ESR directions were:

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| <b>Direction 1</b> | <b>Consolidate the shared vision of the school so that it is sustained through any changes in leadership and/or student demographics, through a continued focus on systems and processes that embed the culture across the school.</b> |
| <b>Direction 2</b> | <b>Engage and challenge all students across all sites, all faculties and all year levels, through further implementation and monitoring of the consistent use of innovative and contemporary pedagogies.</b>                           |
| <b>Direction 3</b> | <b>Build the confidence and capacity of all staff to consistently use and analyse available datasets to inform their pedagogy and improve learning outcomes for all students.</b>  |

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

Significant work was undertaken to redesign the school's leadership model. A more collaborative system is in place allowing leaders to share responsibility for faculty business and responsibilities. Leaders report a greater focus on curriculum and pedagogy resulting from the restructure. A strategic plan was developed through highly consultative processes. This identifies school vision and describes the position on wellbeing, engagement, achievement and resourcing. Policies that define communication and decision-making practices were also developed, and systems to authenticate performance and development practices are in place. Parents report that a more unified culture is evident in 2020, and leaders continue to expand this concept. The intent to put curriculum and pedagogy at the centre of the school's work is clear. Work to embed this continues.

Direction 2 from the previous external school review will be discussed against line of inquiry 2 of this report.

Leaders collect and collate data, and many teachers use this to inform their planning and teaching. Leaders coach teachers to develop their capacity to understand what data is indicating. In reception to year 6 campuses, teachers discuss how they analyse PAT reading data to identify students' miscues. They articulate how they teach to address students' areas for improvement. PAT data is used to set learning goals for students and, in 2020, in the absence of NAPLAN, to evaluate growth at whole-school and cohort levels.

A familiarity with individual students is developed through collation and review of achievement, attendance, wellbeing and perception data. This allows teachers to identify individual student's trends and, at times anomalies, and to ask qualifying questions. Analysis of achievement data is conducted to identify students at risk and to tailor intervention accordingly.

## Lines of inquiry

### Effective school improvement planning

How effectively does the school use improvement planning processes to raise student achievement?

Responsibility to develop students as literate learners is recognised by all teachers and across faculties.

The school improvement plan (SIP) identifies reading, numeracy and SACE as priorities, while increasing student achievement in high bands is the established goal. A significant increase in phonological awareness is demonstrated in the 2020 assessment, directly attributed to improved teaching in this area.

The challenges of practice cite data as key in determining student needs and then raising achievement in response to this. Performance and development planning processes and professional learning communities align with this concept, and focus on building teachers' capacity to understand what data is indicating. Actions within the SIP refer to contemporary pedagogical approaches, including interdisciplinary teaching, with a focus on general capabilities, and engaging students with problem-solving and critical thinking. A review of stage 3 of the improvement cycle – plan actions for improvement – will secure precision of specific teaching practice. Including SIP actions that provide greater clarity about the teaching of literacy, and reading in particular, will enhance the school's improvement work.

In reception to year 6 campuses, teachers are provided a handbook that includes a number of approaches to literacy teaching. A range of options from the resource are implemented at the teacher's discretion. There is uncertainty as to which approaches are expected practice. It will be beneficial to collectively establish which literacy teaching actions will be consistently implemented, and document this in the improvement plan. Reference to guidebooks will support this. Once identified, the impact of expected practice can be regularly monitored against the SIP success criteria (improvement cycle stage 4) and within the school's assessment schedule.

Some year 7 to 12 teachers are currently engaged with a literacy acceleration project and will promote 'close reading' practice across the senior campus in the near future. To support teachers to fully understand their practice within a development framework, the panel encourages staff to consider the continuum of reading stages and teaching strategies within an R-12 context.

**Direction 1      Maximise students' learning by clarifying the literacy actions that teachers will implement R-12 and monitoring the impact against the success criteria in the school improvement plan.**

## Effective teaching and student learning

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

Work has been undertaken to develop pedagogical practice that engages students and promotes critical thinking. Leaders established the school's core business as 'curriculum and pedagogy'. Professional learning forums were designed to expand teachers' capacity to deliver the concepts of 'deep learning' (R-6) and to explore interdisciplinary planning and teaching (7-12).

An R-12 focus on capabilities, informed by the Australian Curriculum and the deep learning approach, allowed students to discover and understand the characteristics of capable and responsible learners. Students confidently articulate these concepts. At the R-6 campuses, deep learning had significant traction. Students engaged with learning designed to provoke thinking, take leadership roles, apply their understanding and collaborate.

Interdisciplinary planning and teaching and problem-solving approaches are concepts in development in years 7 to 12. This has potential to engage students and deepen cognition in the future. Currently, many students are provided direct instruction, followed by completion of a task or worksheet. Year 7 to 12 teachers are enthusiastic to work with primary colleagues to strengthen continuity of learning R-12.

The provision of feedback to students in years 7-12 is valued. Students also welcome the opportunity to provide teachers with input. Development of student agency within the learning agenda will further complement the school's work in developing student leadership.

The unique structure of the school has leaders continually exploring ways to bring about unity. The panel heard about a stronger R-12 cross-campus connection in 2020. An exciting opportunity to further strengthen this through a coherent pedagogical framework is apparent. Collective determination of a few, strong elements of effective pedagogical approaches applicable R-12, will allow the school to further establish its shared identity. Inclusivity will be enriched through consistent teaching that maximises learners' capabilities across campuses, year levels and faculties.

**Direction 2      Extend students' learning potential and further strengthen whole-school cohesion through the development and implementation of pedagogy that provokes engagement and inquiry across R-12.**

# Outcomes of the External School Review 2020

At Eastern Fleurieu R-12 School, leaders work strategically to design opportunities for collaboration between staff. A redesign of the leadership model sees greater shared responsibility enabled. Leaders' work focuses on the teaching and learning agenda; 'curriculum and pedagogy' cited as the core business. Parents report the school puts students at the heart of their decisions and actions.

The intent to tailor teaching to individual student's needs is characterised by a clear focus on data. Teachers and leaders consider a range of evidence and discuss appropriate approaches to consolidate or accelerate learning. Teachers discuss a deep knowledge of their learners, and the importance of staff-student relationships is a highlight of the school.

The panel acknowledges the work already undertaken to improve outcomes for students and develop contemporary teaching practices. The following directions will build on this work.

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

- Direction 1**     **Maximise students' learning by clarifying the literacy actions that teachers will implement R-12 and monitoring the impact against the success criteria in the school improvement plan.**
- Direction 2**     **Extend students' learning potential and further strengthen whole-school cohesion through the development and implementation of pedagogy that provokes engagement and inquiry across R-12.**

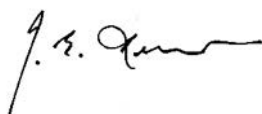
Based on the school's current performance, Eastern Fleurieu School will be externally reviewed again in 2023.



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Eastern Fleurieu R-12 School



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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 2019, 53% of year 1 and 55% of year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. This result represents a decline for years 1 and 2, from the historic baseline average.

Between 2017 and 2019 the trend for years 1 and 2 has been downwards from 69% to 53% and 82% to 55% respectively.

In 2019, the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 72% of year 3 students, 83% of year 5 students, 78% of year 7 students and 57% of year 9 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For years 3 and 9, this result represents a decline, and for years 5 and 7, an improvement, from the historic baseline average.

Between 2017 and 2019, the trend for year 3 has been downwards from 80% to 72%.

For 2019, year 3 NAPLAN reading, the school is achieving lower than the results of similar students across government schools and at years 5, 7 and 9, within.

In 2019, 39% of year 3, 19% of year 5, 16% of year 7, and 12% of year 9 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN reading bands. For year 3, 7 and 9 this result represents little or no change from the historic baseline average and for year 5, a decline.

For those students in 2019 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in reading, 39% or 14 of 36 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5, 45% or 14 of 31 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7 and 28% or 9 of 32 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 9.

### Numeracy

In 2019, the numeracy results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 73% of year 3 students, 76% of year 5 students, 78% of year 7 students and 55% of year 9 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For year 3, this result represents little or no change from the historic baseline average, for years 5 and 7, an improvement and for year 9, a decline.

Between 2017 and 2019, the trend for year 7 and 9 has been downwards from 82% to 78% and 67% to 55%, respectively.

For 2019, years 3 and 9 NAPLAN numeracy, the school is achieving below the results of similar groups of students across government schools and at years 5 and 7, within.

In 2019, 33% of year 3, 7% of year 5, 21% of year 7 and 11% of year 9 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN numeracy bands. For year 3, 7 and 9 this result represents an improvement from the historic baseline average and for year 5, a decline.

Between 2017 and 2019, the trend for year 3 has been upwards from 17% to 33% and for year 5, downwards from 17% to 7%.

For those students in 2019 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in numeracy, 26% or 5 of 19 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5, 67% or 18 of 27 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7 and 47% or 8 of 17 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 9.

## **SACE**

In terms of SACE completion in 2019 60% of students enrolled in February and 95% of those enrolled in October, who had the potential to complete their SACE did go on to successfully achieve SACE.

For compulsory SACE Stage 1 and 2 subjects in 2019 100% of students successfully completed their Stage 1 Personal Learning Plan, 99% of students successfully completed their Stage 1 literacy units, 94% successfully completed their Stage 1 numeracy units and 100% successfully completed their Stage 2 Research Project.

For attempted Stage 2 SACE subjects in 2019, 17% of grades were at an 'A' level and 47% of grades were at a 'B' level. This result represents an improvement for the 'A' and 'B' grades against the baseline average. In 2019 96% of grades were at 'C' level or higher.

57% (43) of students completed SACE using VET and there were 94 students enrolled in the Flexible Learning Options (FLO) program in 2019.

In terms of 2019 tertiary entrance, 56% or 45 out of 80 potential students achieved an ATAR. There was also 1 student who was successful in achieving a merit, although 5 other students did receive A+ grades, an increase from the previous two years.

In 2019, the school had a moderation adjustment of 3.6.