

# **Department for Education**

## **External School Review**

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

**Report for Port Lincoln Junior Primary School**

Conducted in April 2019



## 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 Julie Bishop Review Officer, Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate and Byron Stuart Review Principal.

## Review Process

The following processes were used to gather evidence relating to the lines of inquiry:

- Presentation from the principal and deputy principal
- Class visits
- Attendance at staff meeting
- Document analysis
- Scan of Aboriginal Education Strategy implementation
- Observation of Professional Learning Communities at staff meeting
- Discussions with: Aboriginal Education teacher and Aboriginal Community Education officer  
Governing Council representatives  
Leaders  
Parent groups  
School Support Officers (SSOs)  
Student groups  
Teachers

## School context

Port Lincoln Junior Primary School caters for children from reception to year 2 and has a junior primary special class on site. It is situated 652kms from the Adelaide CBD. The enrolment in 2019 is 287 students. Enrolment has fluctuated over the past five years. Enrolment at the time of the previous review was 320 students.

The school has an ICSEA score of 1017, and is classified as Category 4 on the Department for Education Index of Educational Disadvantage.

The school population includes 13% Aboriginal students, 9% students with disabilities, 1% students with English as an additional language or dialect (EALD), 2% children in care and 65 families eligible for School Card assistance.

The school leadership team consists of an acting principal who is in their 4th year, 2 senior leaders including an acting deputy, a leader of pedagogy and a student wellbeing leader.

## The previous ESR was undertaken in 2015 and the school's previous ESR directions were:

- Direction 1** Support students to continually improve by developing and refining pedagogical practices across the school and by making success criteria explicit.
- Direction 2** Ensure coherence and consistency for learners by establishing a process and structure to enable a whole school overview of the work of the year level professional learning communities.
- Direction 3** Use self-review processes to work with staff to evaluate and revise the annual site improvement plan.
- Direction 4** Work with Governing council to ensure it has a clear overview of attendance, achievement, growth trends and stakeholder perceptions to support the school in setting the broad directions for continued improvement.

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

The principal reported that the following outcomes have been achieved:

#### **Direction 1**

A range of curriculum providers have delivered professional learning in literacy and numeracy to all staff, including SSOs. A senior leader has been appointed to embed consistent pedagogical practice across the site. Consistent approaches to curriculum have been initiated with the expectation that they will be embedded across the school.

#### **Direction 2**

Processes and structures are in place for the Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). PLC teams meet three times each term with a senior leader, focusing on whole school improvement. PLCs also meet at

regular intervals with class based agendas. Non-Instructional Time (NIT) is timetabled to allow staff from the same year level to meet together.

**Direction 3**

The principal reports that the Site Improvement Plan (SIP) is now used to support planning. The principal reported that self-review processes are used to work with staff to evaluate and revise the SIP.

**Direction 4**

The junior primary and primary schools operate with one governing council. The principal reports that the governing councillors receive regular, detailed feedback in relation to attendance, achievement, school directions and growth trends. At each meeting, reports are submitted by the principal and the elected teacher representative.

## Lines of inquiry

### EFFECTIVE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

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

The principal reports that the leadership team undertook responsibility for the development of the school improvement plan (SIP). SIP goals were informed by school data sets. The identified goals of the SIP related to increased achievement in mathematics, oral language and reading. The principal reports that 2019 is the first time staff have engaged in the improvement planning process.

The school has identified Mathematics targets for 2020 and 2021 which reference NAPLAN outcomes for students in year 3. The principal reports that the school analyses and reflects on NAPLAN results each year to identify areas of strength and aspects for further development. The school's commitment to tracking and monitoring the progress of year 3 students is commendable.

Intentional planning for oral language instruction has been identified as a challenge of practice. The principal reports that an increased focus in this area sees greater alignment with the SIP.

The principal indicates that the leadership team currently monitors the progress and impact of the SIP. An opportunity for further improvement is to determine and allocate responsibility for key actions more widely across the school. The establishment of a school improvement team that includes teacher and leadership representatives will support the development of collective ownership and subsequently joint responsibility for the progress of the SIP priorities.

Monitoring the progress of the SIP is scheduled for three staff meetings each term. Leadership identified that the inclusion of the SIP as a standing item on the agenda of the PLCs will further strengthen and embed collective responsibility for school improvement.

The school is well positioned to undertake this work.

**Direction 1** Strengthen the collective responsibility of school improvement planning by ensuring year level representation on forums that monitor progress towards SIP targets.

## EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP

### ***How effective are the school's professional learning and performance and development processes in building teacher capacity?***

Staff are provided opportunities to participate in a diverse range of professional learning. When reflecting on how professional learning has impacted their teaching, some staff provide a range of reflections including; 'I'm now more explicit in the way I teach', 'I try to talk less and listen more' and 'I now talk about what we are learning rather than what we are doing'.

Other staff indicate that the impact of professional learning has significantly increased the engagement level of students. Staff reflect that professional learning in mathematics has resulted in increased levels of engagement from the students, whilst providing consistency and congruence in the teaching of maths across the site.

During interviews, staff reported that performance and development processes have been validated, and include constructive written feedback from the principal, to which they have the opportunity to respond. Staff also noted that the principal provides provocations that stretch their thinking.

Whilst performance and development plans (PDP) are very comprehensive, the panel agrees that this detail may compromise effectively embedding actions to achieve long term change. Narrowing goals in the PDPs may better strengthen the likelihood of achievable outcomes. Incorporating the national standards for teaching as an integral component of the PDP process will further deepen teacher capacity.

When asked about feedback they received on their performance, teachers provided a diverse range of examples. This includes, but is not limited to: team teacher feedback, informal walk-throughs by leadership, structured formal observations and reciprocal processes where teachers and a senior leader observe and provide feedback to each other.

The school is well placed to develop whole school processes where a planned, sequential approach to observations is incorporated as an integral component of building teacher capacity.

**Direction 2** Strengthen performance and development processes by collaboratively identifying evidence-based practices and process that will strengthen teacher pedagogy.

## EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND STUDENT LEARNING

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

Student data is used to inform and refine teaching at individual, group and cohort levels. The school has developed a comprehensive literacy assessment schedule identifying aspects to be assessed each term with explicit directions for data entry.

A range of identified data sets are analysed, including evaluation of targeted intervention programs. The school has used the 'traffic light system' extensively in conjunction with these assessments to track and monitor student learning growth by year level and cohort. This work can be further enhanced through the development of whole school processes that provide students with the skills and opportunity to set learning goals and targets based on their individual achievement data.

Feedback is an integral part of supporting students to progress their learning. When reflecting on the feedback for learning that they provide to students, staff rated themselves at a 2 or a 3 on a scale from 0 -

5. When asked what they needed to do to improve, students provided mainly effort based responses. Explicit feedback for learning is an area for further development at the school.

The school is well positioned to develop whole school processes and provide regular, planned opportunities for students to receive and provide explicit feedback for learning, with a specific focus on next steps.

2018 running record data at years 1 and 2 indicates a decline against the historic average. Reading data for foundation students for the same year indicate that only 40% of students reached the benchmark. With this in mind, the development of a comprehensive whole school approach in setting personal goals and targets in reading, and subsequently supporting students to track and monitor their progress will be significant work for the school to undertake.

**Direction 3**      Develop whole school processes for students to work with staff to set and monitor their own goals for reading and word recognition that are regularly monitored and reviewed.

## Outcomes of the External School Review 2019

Port Lincoln Junior Primary School is committed to embedding effective early years pedagogy. The school has demonstrated a strong commitment to ongoing improvement. Teachers and SSOs work in close collaboration. The school has undertaken significant work to embed wellbeing for learning as a foundation for ongoing improvement. Comprehensive and explicit structures and processes provide a strong framework for ongoing improvement.

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

- Direction 1**      **Strengthen the collective responsibility of school improvement planning by ensuring year level representation on forums that monitor progress towards SIP targets.**
- Direction 2**      **Strengthen performance and development processes by collaboratively identifying evidence-based practices and process that will strengthen teacher pedagogy.**
- Direction 3**      **Develop whole school processes for students to work with staff to set and monitor their own goals for reading and word recognition that are regularly monitored and reviewed.**

Based on the school's current performance, Port Lincoln Junior Primary School will be externally reviewed again in 2022.



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PORT LINCOLN JUNIOR PRIMARY 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 2018, 50% of year 1 and 55% of year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. This result represents a decline from the historic baseline average for years 1 and 2.