

Department for Education External School Review

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

Report for Bute Early Learning and Primary School

Conducted in September 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 Julie Bishop, Review Officer of the department's Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate and Kevin Mooney, 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

Bute Early Learning and Primary School caters for students from reception to year 6. It is situated 142kms from the Adelaide CBD. The enrolment in 2021, as at the February census, is 30. Enrolment at the time of the previous review was 28. The local partnership is Northern Yorke Peninsula.

The school has a 2020 ICSEA score of 969 and is classified as Category 4 on the Department for Education Index of Educational Disadvantage.

The school population includes less than 6 Aboriginal students, less than 6 students with disabilities, no students with English as an additional language or dialect (EALD) background, less than 6 children/young people in care and 33% of students eligible for School Card assistance.

There are 6 children in the school-based preschool and approximately 25 children attend the Rural Care program across the week.

The school leadership team consists of a Principal in the 4th year of tenure.

There are 4 Teachers with none in the early years of their career and no Step 9 Teachers.

The previous ESR or OTE directions were:

- Direction 1** Document and implement consistent planning and programming expectations, with a focus on ensuring more rigour and targeted and differentiated learning support based on students' learning needs.
- Direction 2** Develop a greater depth of understanding of the Achievement Standards in the Australian Curriculum and utilise regular moderation process to regularly inform conversations with students and families on how to improve.
- Direction 3** Establish a rigorous cycle of self-review and improvement planning and make evidence-based changes to classroom and whole-school practices, to ensure there is a positive impact on student learning and achievement outcomes.

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

Direction 1: Development of consistent whole-school planning/programming documents.

Staff professional development is linked to developing a deeper understanding of the Australian Curriculum (AC), with a particular focus on the English learning area.

Regular tracking and monitoring of student achievement occurs across the site and is linked to student learning targets.

Implementation of evidence-based teaching and learning practices, as referenced in the Department for Education Guidebooks (Explicit teaching of Phonemic and Phonological Awareness, Synthetic Phonics, and Reciprocal Reading/Teaching).

Regular critical reflection of student achievement and development of 'next steps for learners' using Agile Leadership tools and processes.

Direction 2: Development of consistent whole-school planning/programming documents, drawing out learning intentions and success criteria linked to the curriculum.

Staff participation in the collaborative moderation process (Network Learning Groups) across the Northern Yorke Peninsula Partnership.

In 2021 teachers transitioned into small school cluster groups, supported by the Curriculum Lead, to develop capacity around the Department for Education units of work, Australian Curriculum knowledge and assessment and reporting practices including the scope for moderation.

Term overviews developed and shared with all families to inform them of the teaching and learning that will be occurring in all classes.

Detailed and descriptive student achievement reports distributed at the end of semester 1 and semester 2 (parent/teacher interviews held in terms 1 and 3 – informed by 'Interview Prep Sheets' to ensure discussions are linked to student achievement/data).

Direction 3: Initial investigations of datasets (Progressive Achievement Test (PAT) and NAPLAN) to identify areas of further development and growth for all students.

Ongoing cycles (approximately every 3 weeks) of student data analysis to inform teaching and learning practices.

Use of the Department for Education Guidebooks and related documentation to ensure changes made to classroom and whole-school practices are evidence-based.

Student learning targets developed, monitored, and reflected upon each term, to track impact of implemented teaching and learning practices.

Performance development plans/conversations linked to School Improvement Plan's (SIP) goals, challenges of practice, actions, and targets.

Lines of inquiry

Effective school improvement planning

How well does the school review and evaluate the effectiveness of its improvement planning processes and the impact on student learning to inform next steps?

All staff identified that they have a shared responsibility for the implementation of the SIP. A student learning 'target check in' has been implemented to strengthen the collective ownership of the SIP goals.

The following strategies have been instigated to review the effectiveness of improvement processes in reading:

- monitoring individual student targets each term has supported students in tracking their progress
- the principal undertakes classroom walkthroughs and speaks with students about their reading progress
- literacy observations by the Principal are followed up with written feedback for each teacher

Staff, when reviewing and evaluating improvement processes, identified that the following strategies had provided significant impact:

- phonemic awareness assessments
- home reading initiatives
- shared teaching
- consistent practices across all classrooms in the literacy block

The review and evaluation of effective improvement planning processes in number and place value included:

- collectively unpacking PAT M data
- Big ideas in number (BiIN) assessments
- Too Smart training, resulting in staff developing and implementing Too Smart kits for each class

Collective understandings of student progress across the site has been strengthened through regular check-ins at staff meetings with student support officer's (SSOs) who provide instruction to students in Quick Smart and Too Smart.

Staff identified the following as areas for further development:

- Early years teachers identified that modifying and adapting reciprocal reading for students in the junior primary class, would provide consistency across the site
- developing and embedding an explicit focus on the learning proficiencies
- embedding the 'Big 6' of reading within guided reading sessions
- ensuring that time is allocated for staff to regularly track and monitor learning progress
- initiate a comprehensive focus on numeracy

The school is to be commended for the thorough and inclusive approach to ongoing school improvement. The work undertaken in developing and embedding a strong culture of effective pedagogical practices in reading is comprehensive and owned by all. The school is well placed to explore opportunities to strengthen and embed planned opportunities to develop and sustain a whole-school approach in numeracy.

Direction 1 **To collaboratively review and evaluate the effectiveness of improvement planning processes with specific reference to the implementation of a whole-school approach in numeracy.**

Effective teaching and student learning

How effectively are teachers using effective pedagogical practices that engage and challenge all learners?

Staff collect extensive data sets that are used to identify the structures for guided reading across the site. Early years and special needs students work from phonics and/or Running Record goals. Individual numeracy and reading goals are set and reviewed each term.

All students aspire to achieve a reading goal of 800 minutes independent reading each term. This goal was extended to 1,000 minutes when several students indicated that they had met their original goal. The panel noted a strong commitment from students, staff, and community in acknowledging and sharing progress in reading.

Staff reflections in relation to the implementation of effective pedagogical practices included the following:

- the need to unpack learning intentions and success criteria to ensure clarity and accessibility from the perspective of the student
- providing planned, regular opportunities for students to engage in reflections of challenge in their learning
- initiating ongoing discussions that ensure all students have regular opportunities to demonstrate learning at higher levels
- exploring the implementation of a holistic approach to monitoring and tracking reading comprehension for students beyond level 30.

During the External School Review the staff completed a survey in relation to effective pedagogical practices in a recent unit of work was conducted. Seventeen percent of staff identified that learning intentions were achieved to a high degree and 33% of staff indicating that success criteria were achieved to a high degree. All staff identified that students had understood the learning intention and success criteria to a moderate degree.

The collaborative development and implementation of learning intentions and success criteria across the site is an area for further consideration. Effective learning intentions provide clarity about what students will be learning. Success criteria is most effective when it is linked to the learning intention, discussed, co-constructed and agreed with learners prior to the learning task. The school is well placed to develop consistent understandings and practices in learning intentions and success criteria that is shared with students and their families.

Direction 2 To collaboratively develop and implement consistent practices in the application of learning intentions and success criteria that are shared with students and their families.

Outcomes of the External School Review 2021

The school is to be commended for their strategic and comprehensive approach to ongoing improvement with specific reference to the work undertaken in embedding a comprehensive approach to effective pedagogical practices in reading. Students, parents, ancillary staff, and community strongly support the school's comprehensive commitment to sustained improvement across the school. Reading at Bute Primary school is indeed everyone's business.

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

- Direction 1** **To collaboratively review and evaluate the effectiveness of improvement planning processes with specific reference to the implementation of a whole-school approach in numeracy.**
- Direction 2** **To collaboratively develop and implement consistent practices in the application of learning intentions and success criteria that are shared with students and their families.**

Based on the school's current performance, Bute Early Learning and Primary School will be externally reviewed again in 2024.



Kerry Dollman
Director
Review, Improvement and Accountability



Anne Millard
Executive Director
Partnerships, Schools and Preschools



Richard Hall
Principal
Bute Early Learning and Primary 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).

In considering the data below there needs to be some caution in making a judgement due to the low numbers represented in the student cohorts at the school. This is done for two reasons: to overcome the anomalies that may occur in any one year and to minimise the possibility of identifying individuals in any small cohort of students. The data below represents a summary of the aggregated data from Bute Early Learning and Primary School from 2016-2021.

Reading

In the early years reading progress is monitored against Running Records. Between 2016 and 2019 42% of year 1 and 53% of year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA.

Between 2016 and 2019 the aggregated reading results as measured by NAPLAN indicate that 46% of year 3 students, 47% of year 5 students and 100% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA.

Between 2016 and 2019 13% of year 3, 4% of year 5 and 0% of year 7 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN reading bands.

For those students in 2019 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in reading 100% or 1 out of 1 student from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5.

Numeracy

Between 2016 and 2019 the aggregated numeracy results as measured by NAPLAN indicate that 43% of year 3 students, 32% of year 5 students and 100% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA.

Between 2016 and 2019 0% of year 3, 4% of year 5 and 0% of 7 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN numeracy bands.

For those students in 2019 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in numeracy 0% students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5 and 0% students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7.