

# EXTERNAL SCHOOL REVIEW

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools

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## ON-TRACK EVALUATION REPORT

Morphett Vale East School R-7

One-Year Return Visit Conducted in March 2017



Government of South Australia

Department for Education and  
Child Development

**This On-Track Evaluation Report should be read in conjunction with the report of the External School Review conducted at Morphett Vale East School R-7 in August 2015.**

### **ON-TRACK EVALUATION PROCESS**

*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 (ESR) is to support schools to raise achievement, sustain high performance and to provide quality assurance to build and sustain public confidence in DECD schools. All DECD schools are externally reviewed over a four-year cycle. After the review the Principal and the Governing Council Chairperson receive a written report with a number of Directions for improvement.*

*A copy of the External School Review Report is available on the school website.*

*In some cases, when the Review Panel finds cause for concern about the levels of achievement and growth, together with evidence about the school's capacity for systematic improvement, a school will be advised that they will be visited again in one year.*

*Schools with a 'one-year return' are assisted during the intervening period by the Education Director and other DECD officers to ensure coordinated, targeted and systematic support is provided. Intervention is concentrated on building the school's capacity to improve teaching and learning across the school, lift expectations and achieve results as measured against the DECD Standard of Educational Achievement.*

*During the On-Track Evaluation process, which occurs 12-15 months after the initial visit, a Review Panel determines the extent to which the school has, with external support, developed sustainable internal capacity to improve effectiveness and raise student achievement.*

*The school's Priority Improvement Plan (PIP) was the main document used as the basis for the On-Track Evaluation visit.*

**The On-Track Evaluation visit was conducted by Tony Sullivan, Review Officer, Review, Improvement and Accountability Directorate and Katherine Holman, Review Principal.**

### **POLICY COMPLIANCE**

*The External School Review process included verification by the Principal that key Policies are implemented and adhered to.*

The Principal has indicated that the non-compliant items reported in the External School Review in 2015 have been addressed.

The Policy Compliance Checklist was resubmitted to the Education Director in 2017.

### **DIRECTIONS FROM THE EXTERNAL SCHOOL REVIEW REPORT, August 2015**

1. Increase the proportion of students meeting the DECD Standard of Educational Achievement.
2. Increase the numbers of students who attain and retain higher bands in NAPLAN.
3. Clearly define the practices teachers are expected to incorporate into their daily work.
4. Ensure the Governing Council has a clear overview of achievement and growth trends to support the school in setting the broad directions for the School Improvement Plan.

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION RELATED TO SCHOOL CONTEXT**

The Principal has advised that Morphett Vale East School R-7 has worked strategically to clarify directions and streamline processes so that a culture of high expectations for student learning is evident across the school and within the school community. The Principal and Deputy Principal have established a collaborative Leadership Team with a commitment to lead effective change processes for staff over time.

### **DEVELOPMENT OF A PRIORITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN (PIP)**

The Principal has advised that Morphett Vale East School R-7 developed its Priority Improvement Plan and began implementation of the accompanying strategic actions in October 2015.

The Priority Improvement Plan was sent to the Executive Director, Preschool and School Improvement in Term 4, 2015.

### **STRATEGIC SUPPORT PROVIDED TO THE SCHOOL OVER THE LAST TWELVE MONTHS:**

Since the External School Review in August 2015, the Principal has worked with DECD officers to develop, implement and monitor the required Priority Improvement Plan (PIP). The Education Director, Principal, Principal Consultant and Learning Improvement Project Officers have used the PIP as the focus for regular discussions.

At the school level, Leadership Team, Personnel Advisory Committee and Professional Learning Team meetings have been held regularly throughout 2016 and 2017 to progress the work identified in the PIP.

Project Officers from DECD Learning Improvement have contributed to this work and have provided on-site professional learning and support to leaders and teachers for a number of identified strategies. The school has also engaged the support of the local Principal Consultant and other leaders from the local Partnership and tri-school links.

A number of other educational consultants have also been used in numeracy and literacy curriculum areas, and in the use of data to support planning, monitoring and goal-setting for students.

Leaders, teachers and relevant School Services Officer (SSO) staff were prepared for the OTE visit, and were able to corroborate evidence of achievements made and raised capacity for continued school improvement. This evidence was verified through documentation and Review Panel interviews with a range of stakeholders.

#### EVIDENCE AND EVALUATION REFERENCED TO THE DIRECTIONS IN THE PRIORITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

<b>Direction 1</b>	
<b>Increase the proportion of students meeting the DECD Standard of Educational Achievement.</b>	
<b>ON-TRACK EVALUATION</b> Evidence found of the school being on-track and building capacity to improve	<b>REVIEW PANEL COMMENTS</b> Extent to which actions have been / are being implemented effectively
<p>Running Records data showed a 3-year upward trend (2014 to 2016) in percentages of students attaining the SEA at Years 1 and 2.</p> <p>School-based data showed 82% of Reception students, 72% of Year 1, and 80% of Year 2 students at SEA by the end of 2016.</p> <p>Increased percentages of Year 5 and 7 students achieved the SEA in 2016 compared to 2015. An upward trend will be established if these percentages rise again in 2017.</p> <p>Monitoring of reading progression to Level 30 Running Records occurs at 5-weekly intervals; TORCH test is administered twice per year to track progress for students above level 30. Students confirmed Lexile Levels used to indicate level of achievement in reading beyond 30.</p> <p>A Data Wall was evident in the school to facilitate the effective tracking and monitoring of student progress against the SEA.</p> <p>Staff established a number of dispositions/Growth Mindsets they wanted to see developed with the students through the learning programs. Staff and students verified that 'curiosity' was the disposition to be taught in 2017. Students verified this disposition was being implemented in maths.</p> <p>Intervention support established for students with NEP/ILPs (inclusive of behaviour) was verified through interviews and documentation. Student Wellbeing was identified as a school priority. Play is the Way was implemented across the school in previous years.</p> <p>Some tri-school moderation has occurred providing staff with insights on the consistency of standards being applied across the year levels in each school. This has increased the capacity of teacher judgment for reporting A-E standards.</p> <p>Students interviewed knew that a 'C' grade in reports was working at the standard. They articulated that 'B' was above average and 'A' was an excellent standard.</p>	<p>The school has focused its attention on student achievement through its strategic planning, data focus, goal-setting, curriculum priorities and teaching practices.</p> <p>The DECD standards are used as 'cues' to raise attention to the fact that there are clear expectations in place for all students and teachers.</p> <p>Some three-year trends of improved outcomes have been realized in reading for some year levels. In some other datasets, another year of improvement in 2017 will be acknowledged as an upward trend pattern and indicate a shift in the school's effectiveness and improvement over time.</p> <p>It was important to hear the students talk articulately about their learning goals using explicit language to do so, for example, "I want to read with more fluency and not sound like a robot" and "I want to identify key words in written problems".</p> <p>The fact that students spoke confidently about 'standards' expected at their year level raises their expectation about meeting, or exceeding them, which is a desirable state for an improving school.</p>

<b>Direction 2</b> <b>Increased numbers of students attain and retain higher bands in NAPLAN.</b>	
<b>ON-TRACK EVALUATION</b> Evidence found of the school being on-track and building capacity to improve	<b>REVIEW PANEL COMMENTS</b> Extent to which actions have been / are being implemented effectively
<p>There was an upward trend (2014 to 2016) in the percentage of students in Year 7 who achieved in the upper two bands in reading and numeracy.</p> <p>The school met or exceeded the target from its previous baseline for students retained in the Upper Bands in numeracy from Year 3 to 5, and from Year 5 to 7.</p>	<p>The school is demonstrating gradual improvement in this aspect of their work. This is evident in reading in Years 1 and 2, and in the Upper Year levels as described in the adjacent column.</p> <p>Data analysis will support the identification and targeting of students who have the capacity to achieve at higher levels. The school is building this capacity.</p> <p>The school is building positive dispositions for learning through student goal-setting and developing student 'curiosity' in numeracy and other curriculum areas.</p>

<b>Direction 3</b> <b>Clearly define the practices teachers are expected to incorporate into their daily work.</b>	
<b>ON-TRACK EVALUATION</b> Evidence found of the school being on-track and building capacity to improve	<b>REVIEW PANEL COMMENTS</b> Extent to which actions have been / are being implemented effectively
<p>Staff mapped out the current state and future desired state for their school, and identified the actions and behaviour required to achieve a culture of change and improvement.</p> <p>Goal-setting for staff and students was undertaken to further establish a culture of improvement; goals were evident in documentation provided to the Review Panel, including student goals being evident in displays and staff folders. Goal-setting was undertaken in literacy and numeracy. Students interviewed verified the introduction of goals in 2016 and articulately used specific improvement language to describe individual goals.</p> <p>Behaviour education, as a pre-condition for behaviour management, has been implemented as a school approach to cultural change for improved learning. Internal and external support for students and teachers has been implemented, for example, RAAP funding, and leadership support. Some staff and all students interviewed presented a need for further strategies to be explored for the 'few' challenging behaviors presented by some students.</p> <p>There are established whole-school agreements in the implementation of coherent approaches in literacy and numeracy learning, for example, Café 5/Daily 5 Reading, 7 Steps to Writing, and Natural Maths. Staff verified that classroom displays and common language used by students demonstrated explicitness of expectations across the</p>	<p>The Leadership Team has provided clear structures, processes and strategies to define and impact the work to raise the outcomes for students at Morphett Vale East School R-7.</p> <p>The strategic directions have provided clarity for staff, students and Governing Council about the 'what' and 'how' of school improvement efforts.</p> <p>Whole-school curriculum agreements have been established in literacy and numeracy. These have been underpinned by clear teaching strategies to be applied in each classroom to create coherence for students as they move across the year levels.</p> <p>Staff have been supported in developing their teaching practices through professional learning opportunities provided in the school and external to the school.</p> <p>Team structures within the school have been established to build collaboration amongst staff and enable them to work together to connect their approaches</p>

school.

Reading and Writing (RaW) time is planned and scheduled across the classes using a modelled teaching approach to impact pedagogical change. This was verified in interviews and documentation during review.

All teaching staff plotted themselves on a continuum, indicating their stage in implementing each aspect of the Reading, Writing and Numeracy agreements. This forms part of teacher self-reflection and Performance and Development discussions throughout the year. They were documented and made available to the Review Panel.

School structures have been redesigned to connect the work from Partnership/Tri-schools, Leadership Team, Curriculum Teams, Staff Team and Professional Learning Teams. The PAC role was pivotal to this change process. Some of this connected work included moderating work with teachers in other schools.

Staff Professional Learning Teams have documented an inquiry focus in numeracy and follow protocols to assist team functioning and focus. This was evident in documentation.

SSO staff verified the effective use of resources in positively impacting on the defined school directions. These resources included SSO time and finances. SSO staff see/hear students using common language of learning through their roles.

Directions for school improvement have been clearly defined for staff and the community. The vast majority of staff interviewed verified the increased clarity achieved in planning and working towards implementation of the plans.

Professional Learning was acknowledged by staff as strategic and aligned to the directions for improvement established for the school. Professional Learning for staff was undertaken at various levels, both internal and external to the school. Professional Learning was then connected within the school through the curriculum committees and Professional Learning Teams to bring about common understanding and coherent strategies to apply in the classroom. Professional Learning was inclusive of SSO staff.

Professional Learning was described by some staff as 'flowing together' rather than one-off in nature. Evidence of termly/yearly planning for staff learning was documented.

Staff develop Performance and Development Plans and meet with line managers throughout the year. Written feedback is provided to each member of the staff team.

There were classroom observations being undertaken by Leadership Team members, senior leader and some staff colleagues. This was confirmed through staff interviews, the Leadership Team and in documentation.

Clear processes and practices to engage staff in defining the priorities work to be undertaken as a staff team were evident in documentation.

across the school.

Staff performance and development processes are underway to support personal reflection and build professional practice. This is an important part of school improvement and will need to be expanded further over time.

Building the capacity of teaching staff so that they take leadership responsibility for influencing effective practice within staff teams is desirable. This needs to occur within the developing culture of collaboration and teamwork to support school improvement. Staff are further encouraged to adopt teacher-leader opportunities to support the implementation of the agreed teaching strategies across the school.

The capacity for learning data collection and use is building across the school. The availability of numeracy data, particularly in the early years, is relatively sparse. Staff will require ready access to quality data for a range of purposes. A learner data management system has been established for this purpose. Skills to analyse and 'make sense' of data will need to be established with teaching staff.

Review processes, including specific actions and timelines, for the school were clearly documented under the headings of: curriculum, pedagogy, wellbeing and communication.

A data collection and use schedule (data triangle) was designed for application by all teaching staff across the school. Adherence to this schedule by all staff is gradually increasing. Timelines for data collection are clear.

Some staff provided class records of reading targets monitored and recorded over the course of the school year. This was documented and kept in the class for student/parent discussions.

The Literacy Committee has collected Language and Literacy Levels for every student using the EALD scales to plan, monitor and track student writing improvement over time. Data tracking across year levels was documented.

**The next key actions within this direction are:**

***Further develop the data literacy of staff to support planning and programming, monitor and track growth at the individual level, differentiate teaching, target intervention and report progress against standards.***

***Explore further strategies, in collaboration with key stakeholders, to influence safe conditions and wellbeing for learning.***

**Direction 4**

**Ensure the Governing Council has a clear overview of achievement and growth trends to support the school in setting the broad directions for the School Improvement Plan.**

**ON-TRACK EVALUATION**

Evidence found of the school being on-track and building capacity to improve

Principal-written reports to the Governing Council outlined progress toward priority areas. They were inclusive of datasets and graphs to demonstrate the tracking of progress.

The reading data wall in the staffroom was used with the Governing Council as an example of the monitoring and tracking systems used at the school.

**REVIEW PANEL COMMENTS**

Extent to which actions have been / are being implemented effectively

The Governing Council Chairperson verified that various data and information is made available to them as an aspect of the Principal's improvement and accountability processes.

Reading data is referenced through a data wall in the staffroom and in graphs presented to members of the Governing Council.

The Chairperson was aware of rising NAPLAN trends in reading through the Principal's reports to meetings and through the Annual Report to the community.

Newsletter reports and the website also provided an insight into the work being undertaken on the improvement priorities of the school improvement plan.

The Chairperson confirmed the perception that staff were 'on the same wavelength' through the structures and processes that have been established by the Principal since the ESR in 2015.

## OUTCOMES OF THE ON-TRACK EVALUATION

Based on the evidence provided, Morphett Vale East School R-7 is On-Track to ensure effective implementation of the ESR Directions.

The Review Panel found that Morphett Vale East School R-7 has established a clear direction and capacity for improvement since the External School Review in 2015. There is a clear emphasis on student achievement, and the Leadership Team has established effective systems and processes to support and focus this work.

As evidenced in this report, there has been a strong focus on defining the classroom practices of teachers to bring about improved outcomes for students. This foundational work will need to continue with the current support and structures provided to build a coherent learning experience for students as they progress through the school.

The Review Panel considered the school's capacity to effectively monitor and evaluate its effectiveness and gathered ample evidence to verify this as an aspect of its improvement effort since 2015.

The Principal will continue to work with the Education Director to implement the findings of the ESR Report (August 2015).

Based on current performance, Morphett Vale East School R-7 will be externally reviewed again in 2019.



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