

# EXTERNAL SCHOOL REVIEW

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools Division

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## ON-TRACK EVALUATION REPORT

Ingle Farm Primary School

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 Ingle Farm Primary School 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 Liz Matheson, Review Officer, Review, Improvement and Accountability Directorate and Debbie Hemming, Review Principal.**

## POLICY COMPLIANCE

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

The Principal of Ingle Farm Primary School has verified that the school has worked to address the non-compliant policies since the ESR. These actions are outlined below:

- Part 1 Governance Items 2 to 4: The Priority Improvement Plan has provided an entry point for whole-school review, resulting in three School Improvement Plan priorities reflecting the directions in the ESR report.
- Part 2 Teaching and Learning Item 5: All staff members were trained in Child Protection in 2016.
- Part 3 School Organisation: There are clear processes now in place for camps and excursions. The school has also worked on the Attendance policy, Learning Code (Behaviour Management), Allergy Awareness and Performance Development policies.
- Part 4 HR Management Item 4: The school handbook has been reviewed and updated into an A-Z staff procedures document to support the induction of new or returning employees. A new process has been implemented for non-DECD providers and volunteers.
- Part 5 Safety Item 3: This has been addressed through staff and non-staff training in Child Protection, and through Campus meetings (Family Zone, Children's Centre and School). An OSHC advisory committee now operates.

Once completed, the Policy Compliance checklist needs to be re-submitted to the Education Director.

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

- 1. Improve student reading and numeracy achievement through the consistent implementation of agreed evidence-based teaching practices aligned to TfEL and DECD Results Plus.**
- 2. Develop deeper understanding and broader ownership for the vision and strategic directions of the school with all key stakeholders, through the development of a collaborative school culture.**
- 3. Build the capacity of all staff to deliver and support a challenging and engaging learning program by engaging all staff in personalised professional learning mapped out over time.**
- 4. Expand the opportunities for engagement and challenge for all students by differentiating the learning through the use of learning intentions and success criteria consistently across.**

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION RELATED TO SCHOOL CONTEXT

Ingle Farm Primary School has experienced a significant turnover in leadership. There have been 6 to 7 principals in the last 10 years. Most principals were acting in the role for 1 year. A Principal was appointed to the school in 2014 for a 5-year tenure, but relinquished her position in Term 4 2015. The Assistant Principal acted in the Principal role for the term. The current Principal was placed at the school in Term 1, 2016, following a merit selection process, and was appointed for a tenure of 5 years commencing in Term 2 2016.

The Leadership Team has been restructured through a consultative process with the Principal Advisory Committee (PAC). It now consists of a Deputy Principal with an Intervention focus; Assistant Principal responsible for leading Data for Improvement; Assistant Principal responsible for leading the Intensive English Language Program; Teaching and Learning Coordinator with an EALD focus, and a Counsellor responsible for leading Wellbeing and Community Support. There is only one member of the Leadership Team ongoing since 2015, who was on leave in Terms 1 and 2 2016, and returned to the school at 0.8FTE in Terms 3 and 4 2016.

In 2015, the Governing Council disbanded due to meeting quorums not being met. The Governing Council had a new Chairperson elected in 2016, and then another at the beginning of 2017. The Review Panel spoke to all of these people during the On-Track Evaluation process.

The Education Director reported that there have been some complex issues for the newly appointed Principal to manage while leading learning and change. These relate to Work Health and Safety, in terms of asset and air conditioning maintenance, as well as health concerns of some staff members.

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

The Priority Improvement Plan was developed in consultation with the Education Director and commenced 28 January 2016.

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

The Principal advised the support offered included:

- Regular visits to the school by the Education Director and the Principal Consultant.
- Professional development for the staff, coaching in classrooms for individual teachers, and facilitated Professional Learning Community (PLC) discussions in triads provided by an external consultant.
- Coaching in programming and planning using a learning design model, and in TfEL through reflective questioning and reciprocal conversations, provided by the CPAC (Coordinator Primary Australian Curriculum) Consultant.
- Coaching with the site Senior Leader for Intervention (Wellbeing) and some teachers by a Support Services Behaviour Coach, as part of the Montague Behaviour Coach trial.
- Professional development workshops in using digital technologies in learning with a volunteer group of teachers led by a DECD and a University Partnership officer.
- Opportunities to participate in Partnership initiatives with staff from other sites.
- A staff meeting workshop in interpreting the PAT achievement data conducted by the Learning Improvement Division Project Officer in Term 4 2016.
- DECD Partnership training for Governing Council members.

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

| <b>Direction 1</b><br><b>Improve student reading and numeracy achievement through the consistent implementation of agreed evidence-based teaching practices aligned to TfEL and DECD Results Plus.</b>  |  |
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| <b>ON-TRACK EVALUATION</b><br>Evidence found of the school being on-track and building capacity to improve  | <b>REVIEW PANEL COMMENTS</b><br>Extent to which actions have been / are being implemented effectively  |
| <p>At the time of the External School Review (ESR) in August 2015, the required pedagogy was based on the ‘Fleming’ model, described predominantly as whole-class explicit teaching. Students were streamed according to their achievement results. There were divided views on staff about the ‘Fleming’ model.</p> <p>Since the ESR, the Leadership Team has worked to support staff to develop a greater understanding of the DECD TfEL Framework, Results Plus expectations, and the role of educators in supporting students to be powerful learners and innovative thinkers.</p> <p>Under the ‘Fleming’ model in 2014/2015, teachers were required to keep a Grade Book, which incorporated the achievement results of Friday tests. The tests were largely designed to assess students’ levels of automaticity in word recognition, decoding and number skills.</p> <p>To address Direction 1 in the ESR report, the school has established a student achievement management system to track growth. There are agreed expectations about what assessments will be conducted. Students at different achievement levels are highlighted to support teachers to track and monitor their academic growth. Workshops have been provided to support teachers interpret the PAT (ACER standardised tests) achievement data.</p> | <p>The Review Panel was told by the Education Director there is little or no evidence of the ‘Fleming’ model remaining. Streaming has been disbanded, as it is in conflict with evidence-based practices, and the school is now engaging with the DECD Teaching for Effective Learning (TfEL) pedagogical framework.</p> <p>As part of its commitment to collaboration and respect, the Leadership Team acknowledged they did not want teachers to drop all previous practices; rather, to support teachers in making sound professional judgements on what students need.</p> <p>Teachers talked positively about using the new student achievement management system to gain a more comprehensive picture of each student’s progress, as well as a class profile. Some teachers gave examples of how they were using the data more effectively for their planning, and with students. This is still a work in progress, although there is a greater understanding of the purpose of data to support growth. The emphasis is not solely on achievement levels. Progress was also described as learners who inquire, innovate and question.</p> <p>The Review Panel determined the school is well on its way to achieving Direction 1.</p> |

**Direction 2**

**Develop deeper understanding and broader ownership for the vision and strategic directions of the school with all key stakeholders, through the development of a collaborative school culture.**

**ON-TRACK EVALUATION**

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

**REVIEW PANEL COMMENTS**

Extent to which actions have been / are being implemented effectively

The Leadership Team has worked to build trust across the school and to develop a shared direction. They have consciously tried to be transparent, to use open and effective communication, to use processes to enable all voices to be heard and respected, as well as provide clear strategic directions.

The Leadership Team has been restructured to develop a whole-school sense, and roles and responsibilities have been realigned to provide greater clarity and efficiency. There has been an acculturation of the school mission, vision and values. There is a greater understanding of the role of educators in developing the powerful learners and innovative thinkers for now and the future. The values are now *Respect, Honesty and Persistence*. Staff are asked to:

- Commit – understand the vision and your role in achieving it
- Live IT – play your part in achieving the vision
- Coach IT – Support your colleagues to play their part.

The school has based its strategic plan on the External School Review directions. There are 3 priorities on the plan:

*Learning Progress:* incorporating the use of data and SMARTA targets, and pedagogy to develop powerful and innovative learners.

*Engagement:* through differentiation, incorporating learning intentions, success criteria and designing a culture of thinking.

*Integrity:* through professional collaboration, incorporating collaborative, professional learning in a number of staff forums and performance development processes aligned to the Australian Professional Standards for teachers.

The school has established 3 structures to support the achievement of the strategic directions. Teachers are provided with common NIT enabling them to meet together in a Professional Learning Community (PLC) to share, plan and reflect. Some teachers talked about sharing their Running Records and discussing their performance plans during this time, although it was acknowledged that these groups are still in a formative phase of development. The other internal school structure relates to the SIP priorities, and teachers have a choice in which team they participate. The third structure encourages networking beyond the school. Teachers are encouraged to be active in the Partnership.

Over the past year, the Leadership Team has promoted the concept of ‘Behaviour for Learning’. The school has developed a behavior code, established a working party, student voice forums, and provided professional learning as needed for staff in managing student behavior.

The Review Panel spoke to the Leadership Team, 12 teachers, 7 SSOs, 3 Governing Council Chairpersons (2015 to 2017) and 11 Year 7 Student Forum Leaders. All interviewees talked about the significant change in culture. The Review Panel was provided with a number of examples in which the strategic deployment of staff now matches individual skillsets and, as a consequence, staff now feel they can make a valued contribution to the school’s improvement.

All stakeholder groups acknowledged there were strong voices on staff, however, the processes used and the behaviours modelled by leaders, enabled all voices to be valued and heard.

Some teachers stated they appreciated the tight structure, clear expectations and directions provided at the time of the ESR in 2015; however, they acknowledged that there was little opportunity for collaborative work. The Review Panel concluded that the greatest change in relation to Direction 2 relates to the way the Leadership Team is promoting collaboration between and across the school, on a common learning journey, in contrast to a culture of imposed expectations and practices.

The Principal has successfully aligned the ESR directions, Partnership Priorities and DECD frameworks and initiatives. Teachers appreciated the opportunity to have choice and a voice. Teachers talked about the greater sense of one school, rather than separate entities within the school. Staff also gave examples of the openness of the Principal, and a willingness to listen and be responsive.

Teachers confirmed that the restructure and clarification of leaders’ roles and responsibilities were working well. They know who they can access to gain advice on specific matters.

Several teachers talked about the realization that they had ‘fallen’ behind other schools in knowing what was

As described in the context section above, the Governing Council was not a functioning governance forum at the time of the ESR in 2015. The Governing Council has been re-established, and is meeting regularly. The Principal has supported the group with better processes of communication and through the provision of information. The Governing Council Chairperson stated they see there is an opportunity to contribute to the school moving forward.

current thinking and practice. They see the Partnership networking with others as important to being informed about contemporary educational thinking and practices.

The Review Panel determined the school has made significant progress in relation to Direction 2, and encourages all staff to maintain the values of the school in all their interactions as they continue to learn and act together.

**Direction 3**

**Build the capacity of all staff to deliver and support a challenging and engaging learning program by engaging all staff in personalised professional learning mapped out over time.**

**ON-TRACK EVALUATION**

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

**REVIEW PANEL COMMENTS**

Extent to which actions have been / are being implemented effectively

The school has had timely and engaging professional learning, so that they are on a learning journey together. Teachers talked about the process of *see, think, wonder* in staff meetings and in classrooms.

The Principal talked about ‘hastening slowly’ and ensuring staff are supported through change. The restructure of the school was partly motivated by the understanding that there are staff members with specialist expertise in their fields from whom all staff can learn.

School Services Officers (SSOs) talked about the change in their role, to focus on the students’ goals as articulated in the One Plan. Although this is a change in the way they have worked, the SSOs with whom the Review Panel spoke were positive as they felt their contribution to support students in the school was now valued. Many of this group have been at the school for many years, and connect strongly with the school’s identity and community. They also gave examples of being supported, since the ESR, in accessing professional development relevant to their role.

As part of the school’s professional development, staff articulated the qualities of powerful learners, the conditions for powerful learners to emerge and thrive, and the practices that develop powerful learners.

Line management is shared across the school. Teachers have been provided with a 2017 Performance Review overview and given the DECD performance template to identify four to six goals for the focus of their performance development over the next 12 months. They have been asked to map their practices and knowledge against the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers as an initial benchmark. At the time of the OTE, not all teachers had participated in their performance discussion. The Review Panel sighted the template and feedback for several staff members.

Staff members were positive about the Professional Development provided. There is an acknowledgment that the enactment of the professional learning into teaching practices varied and will take some teachers more time than others. Although the Principal was cognizant of not doing ‘too much too quickly’, with the risk of surface-level change, some teachers commented they were feeling overwhelmed at times.

Similarly, the response to the impact of performance development varied. Some teachers were skeptical of the current processes, as they saw them largely as a ‘paper’ exercise, and talked about the value they received from classroom observations and feedback from the previous Principal.

The outcome expected from Direction 3 is that students are engaged and challenged in their learning. Professional learning and performance development are key processes to build teachers’ capacity, along with PLCs and collaborative work to achieve this outcome.

The use of the DECD template is expected of all employees as evidence of regular performance development and feedback. It is a professional requirement that teachers are familiar with the Australian Professional Standards.

Staff members have different professional development needs, based

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|  | <p>on their skills and expertise. Direction 3 of the ESR report recognized that one size doesn't fit all. Therefore, over time, consideration needs to be given to negotiating performance processes with individuals, depending on their particular development needs, without losing sight of the purpose. The key purpose is to provide greater engagement and challenge for students, teachers, and the school, and to be able show evidence of this.</p> <p>The Review Panel determined that the school is on-track to achieve Direction 3.</p> |
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| <p><b>Direction 4</b><br/> <b>Expand the opportunities for engagement and challenge for all students by differentiating the learning through the use of learning intentions and success criteria consistently across the school.</b></p>  |  |
| <p><b>ON-TRACK EVALUATION</b><br/> Evidence found of the school being on-track and building capacity to improve</p>   | <p><b>REVIEW PANEL COMMENTS</b><br/> Extent to which actions have been / are being implemented effectively</p>   |
| <p>During the OTE, teachers talked about the pedagogies they use in their classrooms. While acknowledging the importance of explicit teaching, most teachers said that the previous expectations were confining to students and teachers, and limited the opportunities for innovation and creativity.</p> <p>Teachers described powerful learners as problem-solvers, innovative thinkers, global citizens, responding positively to new situations and empowered to use their voice to express ideas and feelings. The Review Panel concluded there is a common understanding across the school of what is meant by 'powerful learners'.</p> <p>The Review Panel heard examples of how some teachers design learning experiences to meet the varied and complex needs within their classrooms. Teachers thought the majority of staff made the learning intentions transparent.</p> <p>A few teachers were able to give detailed examples of how their practices empowered students to be more involved in the learning process, such as developing and using success criteria.</p> | <p>A number of teachers talked about their professional goals for 2017: to improve their task design, success criteria and pedagogies to support differentiation.</p> <p>There was also discussion about using less teacher talk and facilitating processes to enable students to collaborate, talk, think and wonder. Some teachers were clearly aiming to set their classrooms up to develop more independence in their students, with less reliance on the teacher. Others were less certain of what 'powerful learners' and student voice in learning means in practice.</p> <p>The Review Panel concluded there are significant variations in the pedagogical practices in classrooms. Some teachers have been able to embrace and enact pedagogical shifts more than others.</p> <p>The collaborative and more open culture will support teachers to design learning experiences and tasks to cater for the range of learning needs across the school. Teachers also need to be willing to 'have a go' at using contemporary pedagogies, if the school is going to achieve its vision.</p> |
| <p><b>The revised Direction for the school is:</b><br/> <b>Strengthen pedagogical practices, and the design of learning experiences and tasks, to support and facilitate the learning progress and engagement of all students.</b></p>  |  |

## OUTCOMES OF THE ON-TRACK EVALUATION

Based on the evidence provided, Ingle Farm Primary School is On-Track to ensure effective implementation of the ESR Directions.

The Review Panel found the school has developed a greater culture of collaboration and ownership for its strategic direction and vision. There is a common understanding of the school's role in building innovative and creative learners. Engaging in professional learning together has been central to building a cohesive, whole-school approach. The use of data to inform planning, and to track students' growth, is at a functioning level.

The first 3 ESR Directions are on-track to being implemented. ESR Direction 4 relates to planning and practices in classrooms to support learning for all students. This Direction has been revised to support teachers, and the school as a whole, to gain greater traction in all classrooms.

The Principal will continue to work with the Education Director to implement the External School Review Directions.

Based on current performance, Ingle Farm Primary School will be externally reviewed again in 2019.



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