

# Department for Education External School Review

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

## Report for Modbury South Primary School

Conducted in November 2021



Government of South Australia  
Department for Education



# 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 Katherine Holman, Review Officer of the department's Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate and Aaron McPherson, 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

Modbury South Primary School caters for students from pre-school to year 7. It is situated 15kms from the Adelaide CBD. The enrolment in 2021, as at the February census, is 189. Enrolment at the time of the previous review was 174. The local partnership is Modbury.

The school has a 2020 ICSEA score of 997 and is classified as Category 5 on the Department for Education Index of Educational Disadvantage.

The school population includes 7% Aboriginal students, 21% students with disabilities, 42% students with English as an additional language or dialect (EALD) background, less than 5% children/young people in care and 45% of students eligible for School Card assistance.

The school leadership team consists of an Acting Principal appointed in term 3 2021, and a 0.4 Wellbeing Leader appointed in term 2 2021.

There are 15 Teachers including 3 in the early years of their career and 5 Step 9 Teachers.

### The previous ESR or OTE directions were:

- Direction 1** Establish and embed a representative SIP management team to develop systems that provide congruence across all action plans, including targets to identify growth, and processes to track and monitor the progress of specific cohorts at regular intervals.
- Direction 2** Collaboratively develop and embed common agreements and understandings in the what, why and how of effective research-based assessments to inform instruction in reading, writing and numeracy at the individual and cohort levels.
- Direction 3** Collaboratively develop and embed authentic student influence for learning as a powerful means of all students becoming equal partners in their own learning.

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

There was limited evidence of the impact of the previous External School Review Directions and some of the structures and processes to address the Directions have only recently been put into place in term 3 and 4 2021.

**Direction 1.** It was reported there had been some staff involvement in the development of the school improvement plan (SIP). A committee had not been established but has been put into place from term 4 2021.

**Direction 2.** Common agreements have been developed in the second half of 2021. No evidence of consistent implementation across the school was presented. When talking about classroom practice these agreements were not referenced by staff.

**Direction 3.** There has been a student leaders team established however they have limited responsibility. House captains facilitate lunch time activities. There is evidence of success criteria and rubrics being used in some classrooms. Formative assessment strategies are used to varying degrees.

## Lines of inquiry

### Effective school improvement planning

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

The effective use of the school improvement planning cycle is critical to improving teaching practice and student learning outcomes. While the staff have been involved in the development of the school improvement plan there has not been consistent implementation of the actions across the school and the monitoring of impact has been based on annual analysis of NAPLAN and progressive achievement test (PAT) data.

The 2021 term 4 pupil free day, used for site self-review, brought greater clarity and direction to the improvement work, and developed collective ownership and accountability for the implementation of the SIP. Teachers and school services officers (SSOs) reported feeling valued, energised, and motivated.

Processes and structures have been implemented to increase transparency and ownership. Through the analysis of data staff have realised an urgency to focus on teaching and learning and a need to be more intentional with what they implement and why. The goals, targets and challenge of practice have been developed from the deep analysis of data where teachers identified trends and patterns and individual student progress. Staff agreed it would be valuable to put faces to the data and use big and small data to track and monitor student progress on a regular basis. This will provide evidence that they are having the intended impact on student achievement and allow teachers to make adjustments to planning and teaching as required. Staff reported using data to differentiate learning in their classrooms.

A SIP committee with representatives from pre-school to year 6 has been established as a strategy to monitor progress against the SIP goals and targets and collect evidence of student achievement data and growth. Staff meeting time is allocated to progressing improvement work. Staff reported they valued working collaboratively and viewed this as a useful strategy to improve their practice.

Through their recent work the school has established a foundation to build effective processes and practices to raise student achievement. Data analysis identified a group of students just outside of achieving the standard of educational achievement (SEA) and higher bands, and that with targeted teaching, students have the potential to achieve at higher levels. A challenge for the school is building their capacity in data literacy to inform planning and teaching and agreeing on how and what to gather to provide evidence of impact on student achievement.

**Direction 1      Build data literacy to inform planning and provide targeted teaching that raises student achievement.**



## Effective teaching and student learning

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

There is capacity and a willingness to improve practice. Staff reported that there is clear direction, and they are more engaged because of increased opportunities to collaborate and transparency in processes. There are learning agreements in numeracy and literacy being developed to build common understandings, expectations of practice and collective accountability to implement agreements consistently across the school.

When the staff worked in groups during staff meeting, they were able to document what actions they had implemented, changes they have made to their practice, how they knew they had made an impact and to identify the next steps. However, in the ESR teacher interviews many struggled to talk about their practice. Intentionality and purpose of what they are teaching was not evident.

Teachers talked about using data and task design to differentiate learning. Some teachers reported how they had participated in partnership work in transforming tasks. During walk throughs the panel observed differentiation through task design in maths. Students were able to talk about how maths was differentiated however did not have a clear understanding of how they could improve their work or learning. Upper primary students had the opportunity to co-construct success criteria for writing. Students explained how they used success criteria and feedback to improve their work. There was a bump it up wall in one class to support students to improve their writing. These strategies and scaffolds to support student learning were not consistent across the school.

Some mainstream classes reported having learning goals however these were quite broad and not reviewed regularly. The special class teachers are using individual goal setting based on student learning needs. Processes are built in to monitor, review and reset goals. This group of teachers could share their approaches and lead the building of capacity for staff to use learning goals effectively.

In summary, while there are pockets of good practice, there is a need for greater consistency across the school. The school and preschool are strengthening ways they can work more closely to ensure continuity of learning. The development of consistent whole-school approaches such as instructional routines in literacy and numeracy and using data to inform practice would support more intentional teaching and improve student learning outcomes.

**Direction 2      Embed literacy and numeracy agreements that include instructional routines and intentional teaching and provide consistency and coherence across the school to increase student achievement.**

## Conditions for effective student learning

To what extent does the school provide and monitor a safe, supportive, and respectful environment to maximise learning?

Classroom learning environments are calm, supportive, inclusive, and respectful to optimise student learning. Staff and students reported there is a positive classroom culture and students are supported with their learning and wellbeing. Professional development has supported this work.

Through an ESR staff survey it was strongly identified by most staff that teachers build strong respectful relationships with students, understand, and respond to their learning needs and support and extend them in their learning. The panel saw evidence of this in classroom walk throughs. Students are well supported with low class sizes in most classrooms and additional SSO support. The partnerships between staff and SSOs were highlighted as being very valuable.

Many practices that support conditions for optimal learning are embedded across the school. Students reported that staff have high expectations that they will do their best. They feel comfortable and safe with the structured and calm classroom routines. While each teacher may operate slightly differently there is consistency across the school with learning environments and behaviour management. There is a common language around behaviour and the behaviour code is known and embedded across the school. The Physical Education teacher reported implementing the A and B choices used in the special classes across the school and that meant that all children know and use this language.

Processes have been put into place to ensure staff operate in a respectful safe environment and operational agreements have been developed and are known to all. Staff reported the recent pupil free day was very positive and felt like they have a clear direction moving forward in improving their teaching. There are opportunities to maintain and build on this work with a focus on wellbeing for learning and student engagement to maximise learning outcomes.

**Direction 3      Maintain the momentum of a focus on wellbeing for learning to maximise student engagement and achievement.**

# Outcomes of the External School Review 2021

The classroom environments and emphasis on wellbeing is a strength of the school. Parents reported a high level of satisfaction with the school. They particularly liked that the teachers were approachable and knew all the students, along with their learning and wellbeing needs. Parents reported the use of online platforms as being positive, but they would like more information about what their children are learning so they can support them more effectively at home. The staff identified there is a need to be more intentional in their teaching as there is potential for increased student achievement. The school is well placed to continue their improvement journey.

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

- Direction 1**      **Build data literacy to inform planning and provide targeted teaching that raises student achievement.**
- Direction 2**      **Embed literacy and numeracy agreements that include instructional routines, intentional teaching and provide consistency and coherence across the school to increase student achievement.**
- Direction 3**      **Maintain the momentum of a focus on wellbeing for learning to maximise student engagement and achievement.**

Based on the school's current performance, Modbury South Primary School will be externally reviewed again in 2024.



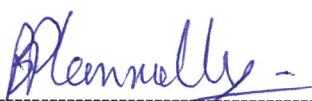
Kerry Dollman  
Director  
Review, Improvement and Accountability



Anne Millard  
Executive Director  
Partnerships, Schools and Preschools



Denise Squire  
Acting Principal  
Modbury South 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).

### Reading

In the early years reading progress is monitored against Running Records. In 2020 41% of year 1 and 76% of year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA.

In 2021 the reading results as measured by NAPLAN indicate that 85% of year 3 students, 72% of year 5 students and 93% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For years 3, 5 and 7 this result represents an improvement from the historic baseline average.

For 2021 year 3 and 5 NAPLAN reading the school is achieving within and for year 7 higher than the results of similar students across government schools.

In 2021 40% of year 3, 28% of year 5 and 29% of year 7 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN reading bands. For year 3 this result represents little or no change from the historic baseline average.

For those students in 2021 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in reading 64% or 7 out of 11 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5 and 40% or 2 out of 5 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7.

### Numeracy

In 2021 the numeracy results as measured by NAPLAN indicate that 65% of year 3 students, 72% of year 5 students and 71% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For year 3, 5 and 7 this result represents an improvement from the historic baseline average.

For 2021 year 3 and 5 NAPLAN numeracy the school is achieving within and for year 7 higher than the results of similar groups of students across government schools.

In 2021 30% of year 3, 17% of year 5 and 29% of year 7 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN numeracy bands. For year 3, 5 and 7 this result represents an improvement from the historic baseline average.

For those students in 2021 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in numeracy 50% or 4 out of 8 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5 and 67% or 2 out of 3 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7.