

DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT  
OFFICE FOR EDUCATION AND EARLY CHILDHOOD

# EXTERNAL SCHOOL REVIEW

## REPORT FOR CRAFERS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Conducted in August 2016



**Government  
of South Australia**

Department for Education  
and Child Development

## **Review details**

### *Review details*

*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 is to support schools to raise achievement, sustain high performance and to provide quality assurance to build and sustain public confidence in DECD schools.*

*The framework underpinning the External School Review has been shaped and informed by research and is reflective of the DECD reform agenda. It has been designed to be transparent, provide consistency across the system, and enable schools to utilise the framework to add rigour and value to their current self-review practices.*

*The overarching review question is "How well does this school improve student achievement, growth, challenge, engagement and equity?"*

*This Report of the External School Review 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. Rather it aims to affirm, challenge and document:*

- *the school's performance and growth against the Standard of Educational Achievement*
- *system performance trends and issues relevant to DECD priorities*
- *the impact of self-review and planning processes on school improvement*
- *feedback that supports school leaders in setting future directions for improvement, and*
- *the directions that must be actioned in support of ongoing school improvement.*

*The support and cooperation provided by the staff and school community is acknowledged. While, not all review processes, artefacts and comments are documented, they all have been considered and contributed to the development and directions of this Report.*

*This External School Review was conducted by Julie Bishop, Review Officer, Review, Improvement and Accountability and Josie McBain Review Principal.*

### **Policy compliance**

*The External School Review process includes verification by the Principal that key DECD policies are adhered to and implemented.*

The Principal of Crafers Primary School has verified that the school is working towards being compliant in all applicable DECD policies. The Principal advised the following actions are being taken to comply with the following DECD policies:

DECD Performance and Development Policy:

- Performance Development processes for SSOs will be implemented.

DECD Volunteers Policy:

- Induction processes will be reviewed and include role statements for each volunteer.

DECD Record Management Policy:

- Processes across the school will be aligned to this policy by the end of 2016.

When the school's actions achieve compliancy with DECD policy and procedures, the Principal must resubmit the Policy Compliance Checklist to the Education Director.

Implementation of the DECD Student Attendance Policy was checked specifically against documented evidence. The school was found to be compliant with this policy. The school attendance rate for 2015 was 93%, which is at the DECD target of 93%.

### **School context**

Crafers Primary School is situated in the Adelaide Hills, 17kms from the CBD, and has an enrolment of 314 students. School population is stable and increasing slightly each year. The school has an ICSEA score of 1119, and is classified as Category 7 on the DECD Index of Educational Disadvantage.

The school population includes 1 Aboriginal student, 4% Students with Disabilities, 3 students with English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EALD), 2 children in care, and 2% of families eligible for School Card assistance.

The school Leadership Team consists of a Principal in her 2<sup>nd</sup> tenure, a substantive Deputy in his 23<sup>rd</sup> year at the school, and a Literacy Coordinator appointed for this year. A significant percentage of the staff have been at the school for many years, although this year several new staff have been appointed to the school.

### **School Performance Overview**

*The External School Review process includes an analysis of school performance as measured against the DECD Standard of Educational Achievement (SEA).*

#### **Reading**

In the early years, reading progress is monitored against Running Records. In 2015, 77% of Year 1 and 88% of Year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement under the DECD Standard of Educational Achievement (SEA). This result represents no change from the historic baseline average at Year 1 and an improvement at Year 2. Between 2013 and 2015, there has been a downward trend for Year 1, from 88% in 2013 to 77% in 2015. Between 2013 and 2015, the trend for Year 2 has been upwards, from 72% in 2013 to 88% in 2015.

In 2015, the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 83% (39 of 47) of Year 3 students, 84% (36 of 43) of Year 5 students, and 78% (18 of 23) of Year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement under the DECD SEA. At all year levels, this represents a decline from the historic baseline average.

For 2015 Year 3, 5 and 7 NAPLAN Reading, the school is achieving within the results of similar students across DECD schools.

In 2015, 45% (21 of 47) of Year 3, 47% (20 of 43) of Year 5, and 44% (10 of 23) of Year 7 students achieved in the top two NAPLAN reading bands. For Year 3, this result represents a decline from the historic baseline average. There was an upward trend in Year 5, from 33% to 46% between 2013 and 2015.

For those students who achieved in the top two NAPLAN proficiency bands in reading, 62% of students (13 of 21) from Year 3 remained in the upper bands at Year 5. Eighty-three percent of students (10 of 12) from Year 3 remained in the upper bands at Year 7 in 2015. This result represents a decline in Year 3 to 5, and an improvement in Year 3 to 7 from the historic baseline average.

### Numeracy

In 2015, the numeracy results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 81% of Year 3, 84% of Year 5 and 83% of Year 7 students, demonstrated the expected achievement under the DECD SEA. For all year levels, this result represents a decline from the historic baseline average.

For 2015 Year 3 and 7 NAPLAN Numeracy, the school achieved within the results of similar groups of students, whereas Year 5 results were above the results of similar groups of students across DECD schools.

In 2015, 32% (15 of 47) of Year 3, 37% (16 of 43) of Year 5 and 52% (12 of 23) of Year 7 students achieved in the top two NAPLAN numeracy bands. For Year 3, this result represents decline from the historic baseline average.

For those students who achieved in the top two NAPLAN proficiency bands in numeracy, 83%, or 10 of 12 students from Year 3, remained in the upper bands at Year 5. From Year 3 to 7, 100%, or 6 of 6 students, remained in the upper bands. These results represented an improvement from the historic baseline average.

### Lines of Inquiry

During the review the panel focused on four key areas from the External Review Framework

<b>Improvement Agenda:</b>	<b>How effective are the school's self-review processes in forming and shaping improvement?</b>
<b>Student Learning:</b>	<b>To what extent are students engaged and intellectually challenged?</b>
<b>Effective Teaching:</b>	<b>How effectively are teachers supporting students in their learning?</b>
<b>School Community Partnerships:</b>	<b>How authentic is the influence of students on the learning and throughout the school?</b>

### How effective are the school's self-review processes in forming and shaping improvement?

The school has embarked on a new improvement cycle for 2016-2018. The Leadership Team began with reviewing their current self-review processes at the end of 2015. They wanted to maintain flexibility for emergent planning and develop greater ownership by staff of the Site Improvement Plan (SIP). It was also important to engage the Governing Council in developing the SIP, and to build on the work in 2014, where aspirational Student Qualities were developed in consultation with parents, students and staff. Leadership chose to use Michael Fullan's coherence framework, including the drivers, to frame their thinking.

The Leadership Team worked with the DECD Principal Consultant to develop an overarching document that encapsulated all essential aspects of their improvement agenda.

Through the driver of Developing Collaborative Cultures, they were able to restructure their Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and develop group norms around rigour, autonomy, accountability and

connectedness to the SIP. The Governing Council wrote the section on engagement with the community, which focused on how to support literacy and numeracy development and progression.

The second driver, Securing Improvement for Accountability, provided the opportunity for staff to have greater ownership of the SIP. During the PLCs, teachers were given a draft of the SIP and a Performance Development Plan (PDP) proforma. At the last staff meeting of each Term, staff are provided with time to review their performance plan and identify what they have done to connect their work with the SIP. The Principal reported that staff have been supportive of linking their PDP with the SIP through the PLC meetings and believes that this process supports the school's improvement work.

Deepening Learning through Effective Teaching was the third driver. The Principal stated that the work undertaken in developing Student Qualities became their overarching umbrella. The four Student Qualities established through consultation with staff, students and community are: *love of learning*, *value knowledge*, *connecting with the world* and *belief in myself*. The Student Qualities proved to have a very close correlation with the work the school was doing with TfEL (Teaching For Effective Learning).

Leadership then looked at NAPLAN data as a starting point, created a summary and wrote recommendations. Staff were asked to identify the strategies that they believed would make the biggest difference to student achievement and growth. This process was repeated with the Governing Council, and recommendations were collated; staff then provided strategies in the school newsletter for parents to use at home.

The school is to be commended for the initiatives that have been implemented in the new SIP cycle. For continued growth it is imperative that the change agenda is embedded across the school.

#### **Direction 1**

**Strengthen and embed a culture and processes of continuous improvement that are regular, data-informed and evaluated in line with the SIP priorities.**

#### **How effectively are teachers supporting students in their learning?**

The school has identified (Annual Report 2015) that Writing at Year 3 is an area for development with a very low number of students achieving in the highest bands. The Annual Report (2015) also states that spelling was identified as an area of concern in 2014, and the programs introduced in 2015 have yet to impact on spelling and grammar results.

The school has worked hard to implement its change agenda this year. Teachers state that the restructure of the PLCs has been very successful. In the Upper Years cohort, teachers are planning together, using a 5-day cycle. They used action research to collate baseline data by observing what students did not know and also to determine what was important. Teachers reported that it was interesting to identify the misconceptions students held.

Some common agreements around assessments were developed by the Early Years PLC, including the introduction of phonological awareness. Previously, Sight Words and Running Records were the only common agreements. Teachers are now sharing their reading programs, and are interested in further progressing communication with parents around supporting their child to improve their literacy skills. Staff developed and made available an app for families to use on their iPads to support their child's learning of sight words.

The Early Years Reading Support teacher ran training and development for all staff across the school in how to take a Running Record. This included working in classrooms and modelling for teachers as required. This is a significant initiative, which should prove to be extremely beneficial in the ongoing development of whole-school consistency and understanding of effective pedagogy in reading.

The Upper Years Team report that their new initiatives in Guided Reading and comprehension are resulting in high engagement and students complain if there is no Guided Reading. Teachers stated that some of the challenges include getting students to read every day, setting-up reading groups, and supporting students to be able to problem-solve. In general, teachers saw the students as being more positive and confident. Teachers stated that they are now able to target individual students due to the allocation of SSO time in

classrooms.

The Reading Support teachers saw the following as their top three achievements thus far: having consensus around the need for a whole-school reading agreement, the restructure of the PLCs, and the allocation of time to work together. They saw the following as their three main concerns at present: implementing the Reading Agreement, embedding Shared and Guided Reading, and working on extending vocabulary. The school is now well-placed to consolidate, build congruence and use data to inform intentional instruction.

Several teachers mentioned that, while they had undertaken extensive professional learning in a range of different numeracy initiatives, this is yet to be embedded across year-level cohorts or as a whole-school priority. The 2016 Numeracy SIP indicates that one of the main actions is to use data to inform planning, target-setting and teaching. The Literacy SIP identified tracking, monitoring and responding to every student's reading progress as a priority.

The Annual Report indicates that in 2015 teachers began to use the electronic format of Running Records with varying amounts of success; the school also introduced the use of reading levels beyond level 30 for primary students. This work will be expanded further in 2016.

It is apparent that there have been strategic attempts to develop congruence in the 'what' and the 'how' of teaching literacy and numeracy. The work of the PLCs in developing literacy agreements is to be encouraged and progressed.

The Deputy Principal indicated that the school has recently had a data management system installed. This was a partnership initiative, and he felt it was now time for teachers to have ownership of the data entry. He perceived that this would have a strong uptake from staff. The priority was to develop clear agreements about collection and use of data. Previously, data had been generalised. A source of frustration was that teachers "have a fabulous headset about students' learning that doesn't get passed on". The school indicated that they can now talk about individuals progressing, rather than groups, and they will be able to 'drill deeper' and use that information to support individuals as well as groups. The school is working towards consistent datasets at each year-level and consistent assessment times. Protocols around this are scheduled in the near future.

#### **Direction 2**

**Staff develop competence in analysing multiple measures of learning data and use the data to provide greater congruence with their year-level cohort plans through the PLCs, their classroom planning and the SIP.**

#### **To what extent are students engaged and intellectually challenged?**

Students are *within* the range of students with similar characteristics in NAPLAN data; however, compared to the historic average (2008-2012), the 2015 achievement is in decline in all areas, and the Running Record data at Year 1 is in a three-year decline.

At the beginning of the year, the Leadership Team presented to staff their vision for the school. Their challenge was to embed the Literacy and Numeracy Plus ethos into the daily work of staff at Crafers Primary School. They developed their vision for the school to *provide a learning environment, which seeks to develop learners who are engaged, intellectually stretched, have growth mindsets and resilience, by building teacher capacity to design, teach and access high quality differentiated experiences.*

Governing Council representatives reported that they would like to see more data on student performance. A representative parent group also reported that they believed students were not being stretched in their learning: "the excitement of really extending is missing in the school" and "girls go under the radar when it comes to academic challenge". There is a perception that the school enrolments fluctuate in Year 7 at Crafers Primary School depending on the make-up of the Year 7 cohort for each specific year. The school context statement indicates that in 2013 there were 45 students in Year 7, and in 2016, 25 students remained from a total of 37 who had been in Year 6 in 2015. Another parent stated that: "I would have left my children here if the culture of the school could move into the area of excellence in learning".

Staff, when responding to a survey about a unit of work they had taught in Term 2, indicated the following:

15% responded that they effectively created opportunities to stretch students to a high extent; 85% responded that they provided opportunities to stretch students to a medium extent.

The reading support teachers stated that students at Crafers are “safe students, they have a rich vocab orally but go back to safe vocab in writing” and “we have safe learners, they like to get the answer right”.

Students, when asked how they would know if they had done some great learning, provided the following responses: “I don’t get work that is challenging much”, “in the last two terms it has been revision so that has been easy, we are just starting to move”, “I am a really bad speller, but I still find the work easy” and “some people are capable of more than what they are doing”.

The Early Years teachers spoke of extending their students though open-ended tasks in maths by stating “show me another way”, and if students are curious and want to go further, teachers *push the responsibility* to the student.

As outlined in the TfEL Framework Domain 2.4 *Challenge students to achieve high standards with appropriate support*, key actions for teachers include setting tasks with multiple entry and exit points to maximise each student’s learning time and progress. Higher-order thinking and positive learner identity is built through succeeding at challenging tasks and with appropriate support.

The continued work on growth mindsets at Crafers Primary School will be pivotal to embedding a culture of high intellectual engagement through consistent and strategic implementation of transformative tasks across all year levels.

### Direction 3

**Engage, stretch and challenge students to think critically and creatively by strengthening and embedding the emerging work on pedagogical practices to design learning and tasks.**

### How authentic is the influence of students on learning and throughout the school?

Students from Years 3, 4, 6 and 7, when asked about their reports and how they knew how they were going, in general, could not specifically state that they understood why they received the grades they did. Several students indicated that grade and effort allocated by their teachers didn’t match what they thought they had done. Students stated that they knew how they were going by looking at what other people were doing, and “if they tried a bit harder next time to give it 101%”. One student stated that she could have put more effort into English and that the teacher comment was probably correct. Another student stated that their report did not state what you needed to do to get ‘that higher grade’.

It is critical that learners understand what goal they are trying to achieve, the purpose of achieving the goal, and what success looks like. Students did not see the setting of learning goals as an integral part of their learning journey. They stated that their goals were developed for the parent-teacher interviews, and could not think of other times they set goals about their own learning. Other students reported that teachers set goals for them. One group of students was able to specifically state their personal goals, all goals were different, and all related to literacy.

Another group of students was able to articulate a diverse range of strategies they could use when their learning became hard, which included: “ask a friend for advice, see if there is another way to do it”, “we look at the ‘stuck in the mud’ sheet, it’s got lots of ideas” and “stop and think, and walk around the room”.

The work of Carol Dweck and growth mindset is beginning to resonate with students; one student stated that an excellent teacher would need to have a growth mindset; another student stated that some students think they are challenged too much and have a fixed mindset about it.

Parents indicated through the 2016 school community opinion survey that their area of highest dissatisfaction related to the lack of useful feedback provided by teachers about their child’s school work; staff rated this as their second highest area of dissatisfaction.

John Hattie’s research from his work on Visible Learning indicates that feedback is one of the most influential practices to impact on student achievement. Ongoing and strategic work within and across year

levels will support the aspirations of all sectors of the Crafers Primary School community.

The school's change agenda is well-positioned to adopt a systematic whole-school approach to student influence over their learning. Students have the capabilities to set their own learning goals, provide and receive feedback that will inform future learning, and enable them to accept responsibility for themselves as learners.

**Direction 4**

**Ensure authentic student influence to support the development of a clear understanding of learning intentions, together with feedback, data and evidence, to enable individual learner goal-setting.**

### OUTCOMES OF EXTERNAL SCHOOL REVIEW 2016

A culture of improvement is evident at Crafers Primary School. Teachers are provided with and use structured time for ongoing collaborative professional learning.

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

1. Strengthen and embed a culture and processes of continuous improvement that are regular, data-informed and evaluated in line with the SIP priorities.
2. Staff develop competence in analysing multiple measures of learning data and use the data to provide greater congruence with their year-level cohort plans through the PLCs, their classroom planning and the SIP.
3. Engage, stretch and challenge students to think critically and creatively by strengthening and embedding the emerging work on pedagogical practices to design learning and tasks.
4. Ensure authentic student influence to support the development of a clear understanding of learning intentions, together with feedback, data and evidence, to enable individual learner goal-setting.

Based on the school's current performance, Crafers Primary School will be externally reviewed again in 2020.



Tony Lunniss  
DIRECTOR  
REVIEW, IMPROVEMENT AND  
ACCOUNTABILITY



Jayne Johnston  
CHIEF EDUCATION OFFICER

The school will provide an implementation plan to the Education Director and community within three months of receipt of this report. Progress towards implementing the plan will be reported in the school's Annual Report.

Chris Minear  
PRINCIPAL  
CRAFERS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Governing Council Chairperson