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

EXTERNAL SCHOOL REVIEW

REPORT FOR WOODVILLE GARDENS B-7 SCHOOL

Conducted in May 2016

Government of South Australia

Department for Education and Child Development

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 identifies the key levers for school improvement and has been shaped and informed by research.

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.

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 Kathryn Entwistle, Review Officer, Review, Improvement and Accountability Directorate and Shelley Cameron and Susan Hart, Review Principals.

Policy compliance

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

The Principal of Woodville Gardens B-7 School has verified that the school is working towards being compliant in all applicable DECD policies. The Principal advised action is being taken to comply with the following DECD policies:

Part 2 Learning Improvement:

Learning Plans: *not all ILPs are signed, May 2016.*

All teachers have accessed Professional Learning that supports implementation of the child protection curriculum. *Some new staff still to be inducted in this area, May 2016.*

Part 3 School Organisation:

'All staff have a Performance Plan': *In progress, May 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 89.8%, which is below the DECD target of 93%.

School context

Woodville Gardens B-7 School was established through the amalgamation of three schools, a preschool and child care centre in 2011. The school is Category 2 on the DECD Index of Educational Disadvantage and has an ICSEA value of 943.

Enrolments have steadily declined over the last three years, from 620 in 2013 to 584 in 2015.

The school population includes 10% Aboriginal students, 13.5% Students with Disabilities, 73.5% students with English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EALD), and 3% students under the Guardianship of the Minister (GoM).

The school Leadership Team consists of a Principal in the first year of her tenure, Head of School (Early Years), Head of School (Primary Years), Assistant Principal (EALD and Australian Curriculum), Assistant Principal (Learning Technologies and Data Management), Counsellor, and Co-ordinator (Wellbeing and Inclusion).

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, 51% of Year 1 and 86% of Year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement under the DECD Standard of Educational Achievement (SEA).

Between 2013 and 2015, the trend for Year 2 has been upwards, from 32% to 86%.

In 2015, the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 71% of Year 3 students, 59% of Year 5 students and 66% of Year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement under the DECD SEA. For Years 3, 5 and 7, this result represents an improvement from the historic baseline average.

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

In 2015, 25% of Year 3, 18% of Year 5, and 22% of Year 7 students achieved in the top two NAPLAN Reading bands. For Year 3, this result represents an improvement from the historic baseline average.

For those students who achieved in the top two NAPLAN proficiency bands in reading, 78%, or 7 students from Year 3, remain in the upper bands at Year 5 in 2015, and 73%, or 8 students from Year 3, remain in the upper bands at Year 7 in 2015. This result represents an improvement in the historic baseline average at both year levels.

For the last 3 years, the trend for Years 3 to 5 and Years 3 to 7 upper band retention is upwards, from 64% to 78%, and from 29% to 73% respectively.

Numeracy

In 2015, the numeracy results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 55% of Year 3 students, 66% of Year 5 students and 62% of Year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement under the DECD SEA. For Years 5 and 7, this represents an improvement in historic baseline average.

Between 2013 and 2015, the trend for Year 3 has been downwards, from 67% to 65%, and for Years 5 and 7 has been upwards, from 52% to 66% and 56% to 62%, respectively.

For 2015 Year 5 and 7 NAPLAN Numeracy, the school is achieving within the results of similar groups of students across DECD schools, and just below at Year 3.

In 2015, 7% of Year 3, 21% of Year 5 and 19% of Year 7 students achieved in the top two 2015 NAPLAN Numeracy bands. For Year 3, this result represents a decline from the historic baseline average.

Between 2013 and 2015, the trend for Year 5 has been upwards, from 12% to 21%.

For those students who achieved in the top two NAPLAN proficiency bands in numeracy, 67%, or 6 students from Year 3, remain in the upper bands at Year 5 in 2015, and 71%, or 5 students from Year 3, remain in the upper bands at Year 7 in 2015. This result represents an improvement at Year 7 in relation to the historic average.

Lines of Inquiry

During the review process, the panel focused on three key areas from the External School Review Framework:

Effective Teaching:	**How effectively are teachers supporting students in their learning?**
School Community Partnerships:	**How authentic is the influence of students in their learning and throughout the school?**
Effective Leadership:	**To what extent are the school's Professional Learning and Performance Development systems effective in building teacher capacity?**

How effectively are teachers supporting students in their learning?

At Woodville Gardens Birth to Year Seven (B-7) School much work has been undertaken to establish a unified culture where commitment to the students and wider community is strong and focused. Given the apparent challenges to create one site from the amalgamation of five sites with varied cultural, relational and educational priorities, the Review Panel commends the current and past leaders who have worked strategically to develop this cohesion.

Through many processes of the External Review, it was apparent that collective inquiry has been implemented to design and develop classroom environments that maximise students' access to learning. The panel heard that all staff have worked collectively to establish environments that 'act as the third teacher'. Walkthroughs and conversations provided evidence that this initiative has been implemented consistently across the school, and that it enables teachers to better connect with students' varied learning styles. Students report that the environments encourage creativity, reduce distracting behaviours and increase their focus on learning. The panel commends this initiative and the coherent application implemented across the school and preschool.

Through conversations and walkthrough processes, it was evident that some students at Woodville Gardens B-7 School have access to teaching that encourages them to think deeply, pose opinions and reflect on their progress. At the Preschool, students were observed making predictions and drawing inference when exposed to simple data. In some Early and Middle Years classes, students participate in inquiry-based learning, respectively termed 'Discovery' and 'Personalised Learning Plans'. Some staff members expressed the perception that deep thinking and independence in learning was the entitlement of students only when they reached the Middle Years of schooling. The Year 4/5 classes were referred to as the 'transition' between highly teacher-directed learning in the Early Years, to independent, self-directed learning in Years 6 and 7. The Natural Maths approach to mathematics was a focus of professional learning in recent years, yet was discussed as existing practice by only some teachers. Interestingly, staff expressed surprise when colleagues from other buildings discussed implementing an approach the same as their own. Perception from staff was that they were encouraged to implement, for example, inquiry-based learning or the Natural Maths approach, but that there was no mandate to do so. The lack of awareness of practice outside one's building was characterised throughout the review. Whilst effective practice was evident in some classrooms, the seamless implementation and intentionality of practice across the school and between year levels was lacking.

During the Leaders' presentation, the panel heard of the collective inquiry that staff have undertaken to determine the 'Woodville Gardens Eight Beliefs of Learning'. This was based on input regarding 'what staff value' as effective teaching and learning approaches, and reported that when reviewed against the TfEL document, the eight beliefs were aligned with the Framework. Beliefs include concepts such as provision of feedback, learning environments, engagement and purposeful learning. Given the evidence that practice is privatised within buildings and the varying perceptions of when students develop learner expertise, the Review Panel sees the Woodville Gardens B-7 School 'beliefs of learning' as an excellent reference point from which to review and develop coherent, intentional pedagogical approaches, that enable intellectual challenge for all students across year levels.

Reports regarding the strategic and targeted use of data vary across Woodville Gardens B-7 School. Some Early Years staff report using Clay's pre-reading assessment to determine the strategies they need to teach emergent readers. A teacher from the Primary Years discussed using the data sourced from EALD literacy scales to target her teaching to students' needs. Diagnostic use of PAT-M and -R data was varied; some staff reported using this data to address students' 'weak points', whilst others questioned the validity of data sourced through a multiple choice assessment. Many staff discussed data having been entered into Scorelink at a time dedicated during a staff meeting in Week 8 Term 1, but did not report that deep analysis of the data had been undertaken. Walkthrough processes and conversations with students made the propensity to use data to form ability groups evident, particularly in the area of spelling.

The raft of valid data that is harvested at the school provides an opportunity for staff to use the sets in an analytical and diagnostic manner, identifying student miscues and strengths to plan teaching responsively. The intended re-establishment of the school's Professional Learning Community forums will provide an opportunity for staff to work together to ask the data not '*where* a student is at', but '*why* a student is at'.

Direction 1
Develop consistent, intentional pedagogical approaches that enable intellectual challenge for all students across the school, through collective review of existing practice and engagement with evidence-based research.

Direction 2
Deliver learning opportunities that are designed to meet the varying needs of leaners through collective inquiry into the practice of authentic differentiation that is informed by strategic data analysis.

How authentic is the influence of students in their learning and throughout the school?

The recent appointment of School Ambassadors from the Middle Years classes was proudly reported by students and staff. The Review Panel appreciated the PowerPoint presentation the Ambassadors had created to share information about their school, as well as the thoroughly planned guided tour. Many staff with whom the panel spoke discussed the opportunity that now exists to establish systems and processes that enable authentic student input from across the school. The ambassadors themselves agree that they would like to have dedicated time to meet with peers in other classes to seek their opinions and respond to their input. Leaders at Woodville Gardens B-7 School discussed the aspiration to develop structured and consultative student voice forums to enable students to influence the learning agenda.

Opportunities for students to influence learning, set targets, review and monitor progress and make decisions about the level of their achievement, are varied across Woodville Gardens B-7 School. In some classes, students set clear targets about learning and are able to discuss how they will work towards achievement. In other classes, students are provided with the intention of learning and criteria for success. Criteria mainly comprised of structural aspects students were required to incorporate into their finished product. Many older students discussed the 'constructive feedback' teachers provide that allows them to plan and review the next steps in their learning. Teachers of older students reported providing students with an opportunity to choose to join 'catch-up' workshops to consolidate learning. Younger students' understanding of how they are progressing was varied, with some reporting they know they are doing well because the teacher tells them, some referring to moving up in ability groups as identifying success, whilst others discussed the use of effective punctuation or applying mathematical algorithms as determining their success. The Review Panel agreed that teaching strategies that enable student ownership and influence of learning are evident in some classes at Woodville Gardens B-7 School, and that the opportunity to broaden this practice across the school is apparent.

Direction 3
Broaden the opportunities students have to influence and take responsibility for their learning through inquiry regarding effective practice operating across the school, and the consistent implementation of teaching strategies that enable student ownership of learning.

To what extent are the school's Professional Learning and Performance Development systems effective in building teacher capacity?

Throughout many discussions during the External Review, the panel heard of the intent to re-establish Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) at the school. Many staff members reported that these forums had proved influential in developing practice in the past, with particular reference to driving the school's work with the TfEL coach. Whilst the panel heard evidence that confirmed staff meeting times provide an opportunity for staff to engage in some shared learning, it was a widely held belief that dedicated forums, structured and scoped to enable rigorous, collegiate processes of professional learning, will strongly influence development of practice. At the time of the Review, staff had conducted collective inquiry into the guiding principles of effective PLCs. During these conversations, staff reported debate regarding the composition of the teams: one school of thought being that representation of staff will better develop

consistent, school-wide approaches and reduce the potential to become organisational forums.

Performance and Development (PD) processes operate for all teaching staff and SSOs. Processes SSOs have accessed were reported as highly successful in developing their ability to effectively support students with learning plans. Teaching staff perceptions regarding the efficacy of PD varied. Some staff were clear that the opportunity to discuss and plan professional learning opportunities, both aligned with school priorities and pertinent to the individual, was of benefit. Other staff informed the Review Panel that they did not reflect on or refer to the documentation or the discussion with their line manager once the meeting was over. Staff members' varying utilisation of data to differentiate teaching has been identified in this report. The Review Panel agrees that structured and targeted PD systems, designed to meet teachers' diverse needs, will contribute to building teacher capacity to use data diagnostically and consistently across the school.

Direction 4
Build teacher capacity to use data diagnostically to meet all learners' needs through strategically designed professional learning and performance development processes.

OUTCOMES OF EXTERNAL SCHOOL REVIEW 2016

At Woodville Gardens B-7 School effective leadership provides strategic direction, planning and targeted interventions. Connections with the Preschool and Children's Centre focus on learning and seamless transition to school. The school works in partnership with parents and stakeholders and has established partnerships with the wider community to support families within the school and preschool settings.

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

1. **Develop consistent, intentional pedagogical approaches that enable intellectual challenge for all students across the school, through collective review of existing practice and engagement with evidence-based research.**
2. **Deliver learning opportunities that are designed to meet the varying needs of leaners through collective inquiry into the practice of authentic differentiation that is informed by strategic data analysis.**
3. **Broaden the opportunities students have to influence and take responsibility for their learning through inquiry regarding effective practice operating across the school, and the consistent implementation of teaching strategies that enable student ownership of learning.**
4. **Build teacher capacity to use data diagnostically to meet all learners' needs through strategically designed professional learning and performance development processes.**

Based on the school's current performance, Woodville Gardens B-7 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.

Fiona Voigt
PRINCIPAL
WOODVILLE GARDENS B-7 SCHOOL

Governing Council Chairperson