

Department for Education External School Review

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

Report for Woodville Gardens School B-7

Conducted in March 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 Maxine McSherry, Review Officer of the department's Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate and Review Principals Sunyl Vogt and Shane Misso.

Review Process

The following processes were used to gather evidence relevant to the lines of inquiry:

- Presentation from the Principal and school leaders.
- Class visits and formal classroom observations.
- Document analysis
- Discussions with:
 - Governing Council representatives
 - Leaders
 - Site Improvement Team
 - Parent groups
 - School Services Officers (SSOs) and Bilingual School Services Officers
 - Student Ambassadors and representatives
 - Mainstream and Specialist Teachers.

School context

Woodville Gardens School B-7 caters for children from birth to year 7. It is situated 10kms from the Adelaide CBD. The enrolment in 2020 was 554 in the schooling sector. Enrolment at the time of the previous review was 570. The local partnership is Inner West.

The school has an ICSEA score of 960 and is classified as Category 2 on the Department for Education Index of Educational Disadvantage.

The school population includes 11% Aboriginal students, 15% students with disabilities, 37% students with English as an additional language or dialect (EALD) background, 1% children/young people in care and 68% of students eligible for School Card assistance. The school hosts 2 special classes (junior primary and primary).

The school community reflects significant cultural diversity including 74 cultures and over 50 different languages. There has been a shift from significant Vietnamese enrolments to now include African and Indian communities.

The school leadership team consists of 9 Leaders including a Principal in the 6th year of tenure, 2 Heads of School (Primary and Early Years), 2 Band B-2 Leaders (Preschool and Information Technologies), 4 Band B-1 Leaders (2 Wellbeing Leaders, 1 Special Education Coordinator and 1 EALD Leader) and a Business Manager (SSO4).

There are 38 Teachers across the preschool and school including 3 in the early years of their careers and 18 Step 9 Teachers. The support team includes 27 SSOs, 3 BSSOs (Bilingual Support Officers) and 1 ACEO (Aboriginal Community Education Officer).

The previous ESR or OTE directions were:

- 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 learners through collective inquiry into the practice of authentic differentiation that is informed by strategic data analysis.**
- 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.**
- Direction 4** **Build teacher capacity to use data diagnostically to meet all learners' needs through strategically designed professional learning and performance development processes.**

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

Woodville Gardens School B-7 has developed a Site Improvement Team to build the capacity of teachers as reflective practitioners. Using evidence-based research, a whole-school literacy agreement has been developed influenced by the Literacy Guide books and a whole-school genre map documented and embedded across the school which was clearly evident in all classrooms. Learning sprints were introduced to enable staff to evaluate the success of strategies for both cohorts of students and individuals.

Professional Learning Teams operate within the physical boundaries of individual buildings housing one or two year levels. The teams show a strong commitment to learning with high levels of independence, trust and collegiality evident. Foundations are being established for students to influence their learning in some classrooms and well-structured trial programs are being implemented with targeted groups further enabling students to be partners in their learning.

Lines of inquiry

Effective school improvement planning

How effectively does the school monitor and enhance its improvement strategies and actions based on their impact on student learning?

Leaders at Woodville Gardens School B-7 have a clear vision for school improvement, planning strategically using both internal and external sources of expertise. A School Improvement Team (SIT) has been established with representation from each learning band. Representatives from the SIT also lead Professional Learning Teams supporting teachers to embed improvement strategies at the classroom level.

The school has a targeted, evidence-based approach to improving teaching and learning with multiple datasets being used to inform planning and future teaching points. There was clear evidence of teachers being committed professionals who engage in collaborative practices including shared reflection, observations, team teaching and mentoring to further develop their teaching. There was significant strength, connection, independence and peer support within the individual buildings and the school is well-placed to now extend this across the whole school to further support student outcomes and increase connectedness.

The school leadership team is to be commended on the work being done collaboratively with a key group of students analysing whole-school Progressive Achievement Test data. The students are looking forward to the next step where they will share their interpretation of the data with their teachers.

The development of whole-school agreements provides consistency for students and guidance for staff. Professional development for staff in Functional Grammar and the consistency of InitialLit in early years' teaching is directly impacting on a significant increase in student outcomes. Phonics Screening has improved from 25% of students in 2018 to 76% in 2020 which meets the set standard of educational achievement.

Governing Council were aware of the School Improvement Plan (SIP) and the broader parent base, although not specifically aware of the SIP, reported Literacy as being a focus at their school and an area in which they had seen improvement in the past 4 years. All parents reported they felt comfortable to come to the Principal and staff with ideas and suggestions for school improvement as they knew from experience their ideas would be listened to and their opinions valued.

Direction 1 Collaboratively extend the professional expertise established in each of the learning spaces by intentionally planning, assessing and moderating preschool to year 7.

Effective teaching and student learning

To what extent do teachers ensure that student have authentic influence in their learning?

There is a strong commitment to building student agency. Key staff are driving the agenda and are supporting targeted teachers in year 2 and years 6 and 7 through collaboratively planning, modelling and team teaching to build teacher capacity. The pedagogy and resources being used in this program provide a model from which student authenticity can be further embedded. There is evidence that the strategic planning opportunities and committed resources are starting to have an impact on authentic student influence. Some students are co-constructing the criteria for grading assessments and are providing valuable feedback about what helps and supports their learning. Teachers gained feedback from students using Google Forms, post it notes or exit cards. Classroom pedagogy observed included whole-class, partner, small group and independent work. Students were discussing learning strategies and their own learning styles in some classrooms.

There was evidence of a range of approaches in the creation and implementation of learning goals. The diverse range included goals that were independently written by students, written by the teacher, co-constructed, short term and specific, long term and general. Some students reported they set goals at the beginning of the year which were then revisited at the end of the year and other students had specific/individualised learning goals revisited fortnightly. Some parents were aware their children had learning goals. Students engaging with their data to set personal learning goals is in its infancy.

Students reported that in the main teachers decide what and how they learn and student voice focused on decision making around school events and lunchtime activities. There was clear evidence of students being provided with opportunities to develop and demonstrate leadership.

Students were able to clearly articulate areas of their learning where they excelled, attributing their success to practice, teacher revision and the speed with which they completed their work.

Direction 2 Consistently provide students with access to their data enabling them to co-construct personal learning goals that are measurable and achievable so they can be powerful partners in their learning.

Conditions for effective student learning

To what extent does the school promote a culture of learning with high expectation of achievement for all learners?

A culture of learning is highly evident at Woodville Gardens School B-7. Through embedding key programs consistently, the school has reached targets and provided significant support for students requiring intervention, enabling them to achieve the standard of educational achievement. There was strong evidence of a consistent approach with high expectations around behaviour, wellbeing and inclusivity. In all classrooms additional support staff were visible and working intentionally alongside teachers.

The school has attended extensively to the wellbeing and care of their diverse and complex community to optimise the conditions for learning. A culture where children, staff and parents feel safe, supported by a strong sense of belonging, underpins high expectations.

Clear evidence of well-structured, sequential lessons, explicit teaching and scaffolding for students was evident across the school. Tasks are designed in some classrooms with different entry and exit points for students to meet a diverse range of needs. Teachers provided evidence that the special class students are now far more involved due to the level of consistency across the school. The special class curriculum mirrors the mainstream curriculum with appropriate levels of scaffolding and adjustment.

A Team Around the Child (TAC) approach is being used by staff to ensure a coordinated and targeted level of support with a key contact person allocated for each family. Parents were aware of the differentiation that was occurring for their children.

Learning intentions and success criteria were made explicit and evident in some classrooms enabling students to further monitor their learning.

A significant percent of students reported they were keen to have more challenging learning and more challenging resources. Students were keen to have more feedback from their teachers to enable them to achieve higher grades. The school is now well-positioned to consider extending and retaining higher band learners.

Increasing opportunities to celebrate learning growth, milestones and achievements with the whole-school community was important to students and families.

Direction 3 Maximise student learning outcomes by further developing teaching pedagogy that challenges every student to continually stretch their achievement, with a focus on retaining and increasing higher band learners.

Outcomes of the External School Review 2021

Woodville Gardens School B-7 is a vibrant, inclusive, progressive learning community where people feel safe, valued and heard. Classrooms are well-managed and calm learning spaces. There is a strong sense of community that embraces the rich cultural diversity of the school with children clearly at the centre of decision-making and planning processes. A sense of pride in their school was evident from parents, children and staff. Parents reported that their school provides a strong foundation for children moving to the secondary setting.

The school has a clearly articulated vision for improvement and operates on a cycle of monitoring, evaluating, reviewing and planning. Multiple datasets are used to inform their goals and targets for improvement. Attendance is a challenge for some priority groups and the school is addressing this barrier to learning through the provision of a Team Around the Child approach blended with a supportive and engaging environment where individual children are valued and nurtured.

Students at Woodville Gardens School B-7 are articulate about their school and their aspirations.

The following directions are intended to add value and strengthen the already effective strategies and programs which are in place to support a culture of wellbeing, learning and improvement.

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

- Direction 1** Collaboratively extend the professional expertise established in each of the learning spaces by intentionally planning, assessing and moderating preschool to year 7.
- Direction 2** Consistently provide students with access to their data enabling them to co-construct personal learning goals that are measurable and achievable so they can be powerful partners in their learning.
- Direction 3** Maximise student learning outcomes by further developing teaching pedagogy that challenges every student to continually stretch their achievement with a focus on retaining and increasing higher band learners.

Based on the school's current performance, Woodville Gardens School B-7 will be externally reviewed again in 2024.



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Fiona Voigt
Principal
Woodville Gardens School B-7



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 2019 62% of year 1 and 56% of year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA.

In 2019 the reading results as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 69% of year 3 students, 73% of year 5 students and 73% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For year 3 this represents a decline and for years 5 and 7 this result represents an improvement from the historic baseline average.

For 2019 year 3 NAPLAN reading the school is achieving below the results of similar groups of students across government schools. For 2019 years 5 and 7 NAPLAN reading the school is achieving within the range of results of similar students across government schools.

In 2019 32% of year 3, 22% of year 5 and 19% of year 7 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN reading bands. For years 3, 5 and 7, this represents a small improvement from the historic baseline average.

Numeracy

In 2019 the numeracy results as measured by NAPLAN, indicate 72% of year 3 students, 67% of year 5 students and 66% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. For years 3 and 5 this is an increase from 2018 and the highest result to date. For year 7 there is little or no change to the historic average.

For 2019 years 3, 5 and 7 NAPLAN numeracy, the school is achieving within the range of results of similar groups of students across government schools.

In 2019 15% of year 3, 17% of year 5 and 21% of year 7 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN numeracy bands. For year 3 this result represents little change from the historic baseline average. For years 5 and 7 this result is above the historic baseline average.

