

Department for Education External School Review

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

Report for Riverton Primary School

Review Conducted in February 2021



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 Belinda Krollig, 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

Riverton Primary School caters for children from reception to year 7. It is situated 96kms from the Adelaide CBD. The enrolment in 2021 is 104, enrolment at the time of the previous review was 118 students. The local partnership is Lower Mid North.

The school has an ICSEA score of 982, and is classified as Category 4 on the Department for Education Index of Educational Disadvantage.

The school population includes 5% Aboriginal students, 12% students with disabilities, no students with English as an additional language or dialect (EALD) background, no children/young people in care and 40% of students eligible for School Card assistance.

The school leadership team consists of a Principal in their 1st year of a 2nd tenure.

There are 5 Teachers including 1 in the early years of their career and 2 Step 9 Teachers.

The previous ESR or OTE directions were:

- Direction 1** **Increase the percentage of students demonstrating and sustaining the department's Standard of Educational Achievement by implementing an agreed assessment policy and schedule to ensure that individual, class and cohort data is used as the basis of informed decision-making across the school.**
- Direction 2** **Ensure a data management system enables teachers to track growth and analyse learner achievement over time for formative and summative purposes at all levels from Reception to Year 7.**
- Direction 3** **Provide structured time and support for teachers to work in partnership to ensure the coherent delivery of the Australian Curriculum from Reception to Year 7, including the effective use of assessment design for each achievement standard to support students in multi-age classes**
- Direction 4** **Increase the numbers of students achieving at higher levels by implementing a whole-school approach to rigorous and explicit teaching that makes learning visible and challenges all students to self-direct and regulate their learning.**
- Direction 5** **Ensure there is a coherent school-wide approach to professional learning that strengthens continuity of learning and teaching from Reception to Year 7, and is supported by planned and ongoing performance and development processes.**
- Direction 6** **Develop a clear and focused vision for learning that is aspirational, understood, supported by all and promoted in the community. In order to enact this, use a consultation process, led by the Principal and governing council that involves students, parents and staff.**
- Direction 7** **Plan for and provide opportunities for governing council and other parents to develop partnerships and work together with the school and wider community to improve student achievement and wellbeing.**
- Direction 8** **Ensure that raising student achievement is central to shaping improvement in the school by articulating a focused approach to improvement, supported by clear and concise action planning, ongoing self-review and monitoring processes, and collective responsibility for outcomes.**

Direction 9 **Ensure that all site policies, procedures and guidelines reflect the department’s requirements and that the associated documentation is updated as required and reviewed regularly to ensure that expectations are compliant and implementation is consistent.**

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

On-track evaluations of Riverton Primary School were conducted in 2016 and 2018. In 2016 the current Principal had only been in the school for a relatively short time.

The Principal leads a culture where high expectations are set across the school. Multiple measures of data are used by the Principal and staff to guide reflection, inform teaching and set direction. Rigorous and explicit teaching is an expectation with the Principal reporting that the school is now led by learning and not behaviour. The Principal identified her personal strength in performance development processes as contributing to supporting improvements.

A whole-school literacy and numeracy agreement have been produced as well as a whole-school data collection schedule, outlining both systemic requirements and site-based assessments in literacy, numeracy and wellbeing.

Parents indicated that staff are a highly committed, “galvanised” team who work together to support all children at Riverton Primary School. Staff reported a collaborative approach to training and development and were using evidence-based research to further develop and improve their practice in a cycle of continuous improvement. There is strong evidence that student voice is valued at Riverton Primary School and children are central to decision-making.

Lines of inquiry

Effective school improvement planning

How well does the school use evidence from student achievement and growth data to inform relevant and high impact goals and targets for improvement?

Riverton Primary School collects and collates multiple measures of data with staff training days, staff meetings and professional learning communities used by the Principal to analyse and identify next steps for individual, cohort and whole-school improvement. The focus of the School Improvement Plan (SIP) is numeracy with Reading Writing Inc., Growth Mindset and Visible Learning strategies also introduced as responsive programs. Classroom observations validated that these programs were embedded. Staff are supported to improve their practice in the identified area of challenge. The Principal acknowledged that the SIP was broad and in response it has been reduced for 2021 with two clear student success criteria identified.

Parents articulated the school's focus areas for improvement, outlining numeracy, reading and writing. They were informed about school improvement through the Principal's presentations at governing council and newsletter articles.

Staff members' knowledge of and ability to articulate the learning strengths and needs of individual students' needs was highly evident. Teachers analyse data to identify students requiring different tiers of intervention. Parents reported that every child at Riverton is important and they valued the work of teachers in differentiating the learning for their children.

Early years' literacy data was identified by the Principal as an area for targeted improvement and this is supported by the data. Team teaching, mentoring, professional development and collaborative planning are being used as strategies to support future growth and achievement.

School Support Officers indicated an in-depth understanding of the class cohort and the individual students with whom they work. They could articulate how they contributed to the goals for improvement and reported that their work was valued.

As the school was previously identified as requiring significant improvements, the Principal has taken the lead over the past 4 years in school improvement planning and setting direction. The school is now well positioned with strong foundations developed in school improvement planning to develop shared leadership in whole-school change to optimise conditions for learning.

Direction 1 Develop leadership capacity in all staff to take collective responsibility for school improvement planning and targeted improvement.

Effective teaching and student learning

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

There was clear evidence that every student is valued and cared for at Riverton Primary School. Students feel safe, supported and are comfortable raising issues or ideas.

Students set goals in their learning, some in discussion with teachers, others independently. The goals set varied from challenging to goals that reinforced an already identified strength. Students indicated at different levels that they were able to contribute to decisions regarding how they learn and what they learn. Individual learning goals were visible in the classrooms with some older students indicating they would like to move to a more personalised approach.

Student leadership across the school has a strong focus with school captains, upper primary Student Representative Council (SRC) and junior primary SRC. Students reported that they contributed to decisions about whole-school events, fundraising and reward systems. Older students take on mentoring roles at whole-school events and parents indicated they valued the nurturing that exists between children and the “family feel” of the school.

Students identified that learning was decided by the Principal, teachers and the Australian Curriculum.

Students provided feedback to their teachers using the strategies of 5 fingers, exit cards or display grids showing how much they enjoyed a lesson and how much they had learned. Wellbeing charts were in some classrooms helping students identify how they were feeling on a given day.

Learning grids in some classrooms enable students to identify if they are a novice, apprentice or expert in a particular area. Students were articulate at age-appropriate levels about themselves as learners and could identify their strengths. A common language of learning is embedded across all classes.

Students were not aware of their own data beyond reading levels and indicated the assessments they undertook were for teacher-use only.

Evidence-based research is being explored by the Principal and teachers for future learning on student influence. The school is well positioned to support students in developing an understanding about the next steps in their learning.

Direction 2 Support students to engage with their own data, enabling them to set goals for improvement in personal learning.

Conditions for effective student learning

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

The Principal and staff clearly articulate the school's vision and values with a focus on improving achievement for all students. Students reported they were proud of their school and their teachers. Nine parents described the school as having an inclusive environment where they and their children were not judged or discriminated against. They described the school as not just a "feel good" place, but a place where academic achievement is equally valued.

Learning growth, achievement and milestones are recognised and celebrated through Class Dojo points, class celebrations and Monday Afternoon Awards (assembly time). Students indicated that they were satisfied that they were at different levels.

Aboriginal students articulated strategies they used within the Growth Mindset program. They described the learning pit and the different strategies they tried when they encountered a problem. They felt that the learning was set at just the right level, not too easy or too challenging.

The school has moved from 5 to 4 classes this year. Three parents indicated having 3 year levels in 1 class made it challenging for teachers to help all children achieve their best.

Most students indicated they were aiming for A, B or C grades, with 3 students indicating the effort grade was more important. Students indicated they would need to focus, work harder, lift their own expectations of themselves or do extra work in order to achieve at a higher level. Some students felt that higher grades were attainable whereas others did not.

Riverton Primary School has a strong culture of support that can enable all students to achieve at higher levels and move into the higher bands of learning. Teachers explained that they had spent considerable time collaboratively planning units of work to ensure consistency. They saw further investigation into A-E grades and the moderation of assessment tasks could be a valuable next step to help students meet high expectations.

Direction 3 Collaboratively moderate work samples and assessment tasks using the A-E grades and provide frameworks for students enabling them to monitor and assess their learning and understand what is required to achieve a higher grade.

Outcomes of the External School Review 2021

Riverton Primary School is a welcoming, safe, supportive and student centred school with a strong sense of pride from the staff, students and community. The school is responsive to data, with the staff engaging in collaborative practices including mentoring, team teaching and reflective conversations. Clear structures are in place to manage issues impacting on student learning, behaviour and wellbeing. Students are engaged and able to confidently talk about their learning in an informed manner.

The following directions are provided to value-add to the strong foundations which exist at Riverton Primary School and can further enable all students to achieve at the highest level and remain in the higher bands of learning.

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

- Direction 1** **Develop leadership capacity in all staff to take collective responsibility for school improvement planning and targeted improvement.**
- Direction 2** **Support students to engage with their own data, enabling them to set goals for improvement in personal learning.**
- Direction 3** **Collaboratively moderate work samples and assessment tasks using the A-E grades and provide frameworks for students enabling them to monitor and assess their learning and understand what is required to achieve a higher grade.**

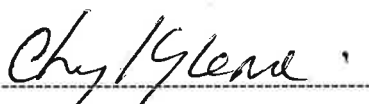
Based on the school's current performance, Riverton Primary School will be externally reviewed again in 2024.



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Cheryl Glenie
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Riverton 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 2019 47% of year 1 and 29% of year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. This result represents a decline from the historic baseline average.

In 2019 the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 76% of year 3 students, 93% of year 5 students and 81% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA.

For year 3 this result represents a decline from the historic baseline average, and for years 5 and 7, an improvement from the historic baseline average.

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

In 2019 38% of year 3, 36% of year 5 and 13% of year 7 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN reading bands.

For year 3 this result represents a decline from the historic baseline average.

For those students in 2019 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in reading, 36% of students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 5 and 13% of students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 7.

Numeracy

In 2019 the numeracy results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 76% of year 3 students, 93% of year 5 students and 88% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA.

For year 3 students this represents little or no change from the historical base line average and for year 5 and 7 students, this result represents an improvement from the historic baseline average.

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

In 2019 29% of year 3, 7% of year 5 and 25% of year 7 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN numeracy bands.

For year 3 and 5, this result represents a decline from the historic baseline average.

For year 7 this result represents an improvement from the historical baseline average.

