

Department for Education

External School Review

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

Report for Henley High School

Conducted in June 2019



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 all have been considered and contribute to the development and directions of this report.

This review was conducted by Kathryn Entwistle, Review Officer of the department's Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate and Marion Coady and Ray Marino, Review Principals.

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
- Scan of Aboriginal Education Strategy implementation
- Discussions with:
 - Governing Council representatives
 - Leaders
 - School Support Officers (SSOs)
 - Student groups
 - Teachers

School context

Henley High School caters for students from year 8 to year 12. It is situated 11kms from the Adelaide CBD. The enrolment in 2019 is 1410 students. Enrolment at the previous review was 1350. The school provides a supported learning centre for students with special needs and in 2019, 26 students attend this facility.

The school is classified as Category 6 on the Department for Education Index of Educational Disadvantage and the ICSEA score is 1029. The local partnership is Central West.

The school population includes 3% Aboriginal students, 4% students with a verified disability, 15% of families eligible for school card assistance, 39% students of English as an additional language or dialect background and 2 young people in care.

The school leadership team consists of a principal in his first tenure at the school, a deputy principal, 5 assistant principals, 3 senior leaders and 2 wellbeing support coordinators. The B6 deputy principal role and B4 assistant principal role are described as directors for learning and inclusion respectively. There are 98.9 FTE staff filled by 118 teachers including 19 in the early years of their career and 29 Step 9 teachers.

The school values are: To Strive, to Seek and Not to Yield, underpinned by responsibility and respect.

The previous ESR or OTE directions were:

- Direction 1** Increase the number of students attending school and attaining higher levels of achievement by identifying and promoting teaching practices that stretch and challenge learners.
- Direction 2** Raise and sustain higher levels of achievement for all students as they progress through the school by building teacher capacity to effectively design assessment tasks to cater for the full range of student learners and to measure the effectiveness of tasks.

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

Both directions from the 2015 ESR cite an increase as a desired outcome: one regarding attendance and the other being student achievement. Data sourced during the 2019 review confirms that these outcomes have been accomplished. The school's 2018 attendance data was the highest in six years for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal learners, and 2019 data shows that this improvement is sustained, as at the time of review, with attendance for both groups exceeds all historical averages.

SACE A and B grade achievement sat at 62% in 2015 and reached 68% in 2018. In NAPLAN reading, SEA and high band achievement have increased steadily over 3 years, as has high band achievement in numeracy. See Appendix 1 for further confirmation regarding the school's recent improvement.

The concept of teaching practices that engage and challenge learners was explored at length during the review. Please see line of inquiry 2 for detailed findings regarding this direction.

The 2015 ESR direction 2 refers to assessment design and catering for a range of learners' needs. Whilst some faculties have embarked on conversations regarding formative assessment and a few examples of collaborative planning were apparent, the practice is not common across the school. Building teacher and leader capacity to fully understand and implement contemporary assessment design remains an

area for the school to develop. Direction 1 of this report refers to the opportunity to focus capacity building systems more strategically on school priorities.

Lines of inquiry

EFFECTIVE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

How well does the school review and evaluate the effectiveness of its improvement planning processes and impact on student learning to inform next steps?

Evidence confirmed that the process undertaken to generate the 2019-2021 School Improvement Plan (SIP) was conducted consultatively. Staff report that in term 4 2018, forums were convened to allow them to review data and evidence that informed the school's goals and challenges of practice. As a result, almost all staff are able to articulate the school's priorities.

The panel was presented with a detailed document that shows the actions each faculty will implement as they work towards the targets. The document identifies roles, responsibilities and success criteria, and is time-framed.

Teachers are committed to the school's agreed SIP and concentrating on these few priorities will be key in consistently implementing the challenges of practice and sustaining improvement. They discuss 'threads' operating and seek 'links' to build strong direction. However, a number of staff report that at times initiatives are introduced that they did not see the alignment to the SIP and are still seeking the need for greater clarity and focus regarding the improvement agenda.

Recent re-design of the Performance and Development (PD) model at the school sees teachers offered access to 2 or more leaders, or mentors. The panel acknowledges the intent behind this implementation to develop a more inclusive and democratic approach. Some teachers discuss their uncertainty regarding how the system will support growth in practice or career development. The panel encourages leaders to continue growing and learning to develop the efficacy of this initiative over time.

Targets within teachers' PD plans are clearly informed by the SIP priorities. Whilst this alignment is indicative of effective improvement planning, an opportunity to better design the targets to specify which teaching strategies the staff member will develop to implement the challenges of practice is apparent. Identification of ongoing actions the teacher and their mentor will undertake will support the development of expected practice. The approach implemented to support early career teachers, whereby mentors meet regularly with these teachers, plan collaboratively and conduct observations, is highly commended by the ESR panel. This model may well be referenced when designing processes that build capacity for all teachers.

Direction 1 Ensure improvement priorities are achieved and challenges of practice are implemented through strategic performance development processes that enable teachers to deliver agreed teaching practice.

EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND STUDENT LEARNING:

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

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

Please note: In order to represent the concept of a refined focus on improvement planning (see direction 1), the panel has deliberately elected to offer 1 strong direction against these 2 lines of inquiry.

There is a clear intent to implement teaching practice and planning that is contemporary and evidence-based. The strategic appointment of a leadership position, director of learning, attests to this. Under this leader's tutelage, staff and students have provided feedback regarding effective teaching and learning. Staff have also been re-introduced to the TfEL Framework as the school works towards pedagogical reform and coherence.

The panel agrees this intent is timely. Class visits and conversation with teachers and students make it evident that teaching practices and subsequently learning opportunities, differ greatly across the school. Students report that learning in some subject areas is collaborative, engaging and motivational, and in some classes differentiated to maximise student access. Learning in other areas is reportedly less inspiring or accessible, requiring students to complete a work sheet or progress through a text book, at times with either too much, or too little, teacher scaffolding. Interestingly, both students and teachers agree that the curriculum areas historically perceived as less likely to involve inquiry or spark curiosity, ie maths or English, are in some classes providing engaging provocations and stimulating thinking.

The school's challenges of practice make evident the intent to implement high yield practices. The panel agrees that a more coherent, evidence-based pedagogical approach will better challenge and extend students, whilst ensuring transition through year levels and across curriculum is seamless.

The concept of student agency within learning is again, one that has seen a leader appointed to progress inclusion. Challenge of practice 2 cites the intent to develop greater student ownership of learning and the panel heard much reference of the need to do so 'authentically'.

Opportunities for students to take part in whole-school leadership forums are many. The student executive group, house captains and ambassadors take part in leadership opportunities, some of which see them attending pupil free days and governing council meetings. Leaders and students agree that authenticating the influence and impact of their contribution is the next important step.

When considering the concept of student agency within the learning agenda, teaching strategies that ensure the intent and the criteria of learning are known to students, is crucial. In many classes, students are provided success criteria, often aligned with grades. Task notes are reportedly of value in some learning areas, allowing students to monitor and review their progress. The opportunity to develop an agreed, consistently applied approach to the design and delivery of success criteria and learning intentions will support the school's move to greater student agency.

A highlight of the external review was the regular report that teachers provide students with useful formative feedback. Students appreciate the guidance this offers them in striving for improvement. Whilst some evidence of teachers seeking input from students was sourced, this was not common practice. Students all agreed they would welcome opportunities to offer teachers input regarding the efficacy of the learning they are provided, and what aspects the teacher might develop, implement or adjust.

Direction 2 Enable greater student ownership of learning and deepen their thinking through the development of an agreed pedagogical approach that makes success criteria and learning intentions clear and ensures teachers and students provide each other feedback.

Outcomes of the External School Review 2019

At Henley High School, leaders are working to implement high yield and contemporary practices across the school. The profile of data informed planning has been raised, and at a faculty level, informs cohorts' actions. A strategically designed leadership structure aligns with the school's priorities and the new house model sees students' wellbeing for learning well supported. The student community is generally representative of interested and articulate learners, who are well placed to engage with challenging learning opportunities. The school's recently developed improvement plan cites current, evidence-based approaches as challenges of practice, and the panel agrees that a continued, unrelenting focus on the implementation of these will ensure the intended outcomes.

The principal will work with the education director to implement the following directions:

- Direction 1** Ensure improvement priorities are achieved and challenges of practice are implemented through strategic performance development processes that enable teachers to deliver agreed teaching practice.
- Direction 2** Enable greater student ownership of learning and deepen their thinking through the development of an agreed pedagogical approach that makes success criteria and learning intentions clear and ensures teachers and students provide each other feedback.

Based on the school's current performance, Henley High School will be externally reviewed again in 2022.



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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 2018, the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 80% of year 9 students demonstrated the expected achievement as determined by the SEA. This result represents an improvement from the historic baseline average.

Between 2016 and 2018, the trend has been upwards, from 72% to 80% in respectively.

For 2018 NAPLAN reading, the school is achieving above the results of similar students across government schools.

Between 2016 and 2018, the school has consistently achieved higher NAPLAN reading relative to the results of similar groups of students across government schools.

In 2018, 14% of year 9 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN reading bands.

For those students who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in reading, 31%, or 25 out of 80 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 9, and 42% or 26 out of 62 students from year 7 remain in the upper bands at year 9 in 2018.

Numeracy

In 2018, the numeracy results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 75% of year 9 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. This result represents little or no change from the historic baseline average.

For 2018 NAPLAN numeracy, the school is achieving within the results of similar groups of students across government schools.

In 2018, 19% of year 9 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN numeracy bands.

Between 2016 and 2018, the trend has been upwards from 9% to 19% respectively.

For those students who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in numeracy, 43%, or 23 out of 54 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 9 and 58%, or 33 out of 57 students from year 7 remain in the upper bands at year 9 in 2018.

SACE

SACE completion rates in 2018, showed 83% of students enrolled in February and 97% of those enrolled in October, who had the potential to complete their SACE did go on to successfully achieve SACE. This result for October SACE completion represents little or no change from the historic baseline average.

For compulsory SACE Stage 1 and 2 subjects in 2018, 97% of students successfully completed their Stage 1 Personal Learning Plan, 99% of students successfully completed their Stage 1 literacy units, 91% successfully completed their Stage 1 numeracy units and 98% successfully completed their Stage 2 Research Project.

For attempted Stage 2 SACE subjects in 2018, 97% of grades achieved were at 'C-' level or higher, 25% of grades were at an 'A' level and 43% of grades were at a 'B' level.

This result represents little or no change from the historic baseline averages for the 'C-' or higher and an improvement in 'A' grade and 'B' grade achievement.

Nineteen percent of students completed SACE using VET and there were 40 students enrolled in the Flexible Learning Options program in 2018.

In terms of 2018 tertiary entrance, 76% or 186 out of 244 potential students achieved an ATAR or TAFE SA selection score. There were also 24 students who were successful at achieving a merit.