

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

# EXTERNAL SCHOOL REVIEW

## REPORT FOR LOCKLEYS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Conducted in June 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 Ros Frost, 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 Lockleys Primary School has verified that the school is working towards compliance in all applicable DECD policies. The Principal advised action is being taken to comply with the following DECD policies:

Part 1 Governance: Items 2, 3, 5, 7, and 8

Collaborative development of the Site Improvement Plan.

Part 2 Learning Improvement: Items 1, 7 and 9

The school is implementing the DECD Curriculum, Pedagogy, Assessment and Reporting Policy for Reception to Year 7.

Part 3 School Organisation: Items 3 and 4

Policy Development.

Part 5 Safety: Items 1, 2, 4 and 5

Staff and Volunteers.

Part 6 Site Procedures: Item 1

Hazardous Chemicals.

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 90%, which is below the DECD target of 93%.

### **School context**

Lockleys Primary School, located 7kms west of Adelaide, has recently declined in enrolment, dropping from 140-150 for the last 4 years to 120 in 2016. The school has an ICSEA score of 1042 and is classified as Category 6 on the DECD Index of Educational Disadvantage.

The school population includes 1% Aboriginal students, 7.5% Students with Disabilities, 50% students with English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EALD), no students under the Guardianship of the Minister (GoM), and 2.5% of families eligible for School Card assistance.

The school Leadership Team consists of a Principal in the first year of a five-year tenure.

### **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, 79% of Year 1 and 18% of Year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement under the DECD Standard of Educational Achievement (SEA). This result represents an improvement for Year 1. The result for Year 2 was impacted

significantly by data not being entered within the time for data collection.

In 2015, the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 94% of Year 3 students, 67% of Year 5 students, and 69% of Year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement under the DECD SEA. For Year 3, this result represents improvement from the historic baseline average and little or no change for Years 5 and 7.

Between 2013 and 2015, the trend for Year 3 has been upwards from 64% to 94%.

For 2015 Year 3 NAPLAN Reading, the school is achieving higher than the results of similar students, and for Year 5 and 7, the results are within the range of similar students.

In 2015, 44% of Year 3, 4% of Year 5 and 23% 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 Year 5, there is a trend downwards, from 40% in 2013 to 4% in 2015.

For those students who achieved in the top two NAPLAN proficiency bands in reading, 25%, or 1 of 4 students from Year 3 remains in the upper bands at Year 5 in 2015, and 100%, or 2 of 2 students from Year 3 remain in the upper bands at Year 7 in 2015. For Year 5, this result represents a decline from the historic baseline average and, for Year 7, an improvement.

For the last 3 years, the trend for Years 3 to 5 upper band retention is downwards, from 100% to 25%.

### **Numeracy**

In 2015, the numeracy results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 78% of Year 3 students, 54% of Year 5 students and 69% of Year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement under the DECD SEA. For Year 3, this result represents an improvement from the historic baseline average, for Year 5 a decline, and for Year 7, little or no change.

For 2015 Year 3 NAPLAN Numeracy, the school is achieving at the top range of results of similar groups of students across DECD schools. For Year 5, achievement is below results of similar groups of students, whilst Year 7 results are within range of similar groups of students.

In 2015, 0% of Year 3, 4% of Year 5 and 23% of Year 7 students achieved in the top two NAPLAN Numeracy bands.

Between 2013 and 2015, the trend for Year 3 and 5 has been downwards, from 32% to 0% and 30% to 4%, respectively.

For those students who achieved in the top two NAPLAN proficiency bands in numeracy, 20%, or 1 of 5 students from Year 3, remains in the upper bands at Year 5 in 2015, and 100%, or 2 of 2 students from Year 3, remain in the upper bands at Year 7 in 2015. For Year 5, this result represents a decline from the historic baseline average.

For the last 3 years, the trend for Years 3 to 5 upper band retention is downwards, from 100% to 20%.

### **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?

**Improvement Agenda:** How well does the school make data-informed judgements about student learning?

**Effective Leadership:** How effectively does the school leadership foster a culture of learning?

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

Opportunities for students to engage in learning that enables intellectual challenge and provokes higher-order thinking are apparent in some classrooms at Lockleys Primary School. In some aspects of the External Review process, the panel was provided evidence that teaching is designed to elicit student involvement in solving problems and thinking creatively. The Natural Maths approach that is operating in most classrooms across the school exemplifies this. In some classes, students take part in learning that requires lower-level cognitive processing, such as activities with spelling words that involve writing the words with 'special' pens or in decorative lettering. The understanding that consistency is vital in ensuring student achievement was evident throughout conversations with teachers; however, at the time of the External Review, a consistent pedagogical approach and school-wide agreement regarding this, was not apparent. The panel members heard and saw much evidence of consistent approaches through a program, such as the Big Six, the *what* we teach, and less evidence that there is coherence and agreement about *how* we teach at Lockleys Primary School.

The panel heard reference to the school's current work in looking at teaching strategies that encourage students to think and reflect through the *tell to ask* strategy. This pedagogical tactic requires teachers to orchestrate the conversation and students to do the thinking and talking, representing a high-yield approach that can be implemented Reception to Year 7, and that will contribute to not just consistency, but intellectual challenge for students. Recently harvested NAPLAN and Running Record data shows that students achieving in Higher Bands in Years 3 and 5, are not retaining this level in Years 5 and 7. The collective identification and consistent implementation of pedagogy that promotes and extends students' cognitive development may well ensure students exceeding standards maintain this achievement.

Through almost all processes of the External Review, it was highly apparent that students at Lockleys Primary School appreciate the value of education and are willing participants in the opportunities provided to them in class. They present as confident, respectful young people who are articulate and happy to interact with peers and adults. Classroom walk-throughs made clear to the panel that some students are able to discuss the learning intention and how they are progressing towards it. In the Literacy Circle, students described the comprehension strategy they were practising and how this contributes to their understanding of text. In other forums of the review, it was evident that students took part in the work expected of them with little understanding of the purpose or how they would know if they had been successful. Many students explained that they knew they were going well with their learning if the teacher told them they were, or if they finished the work early. Understanding of the criteria for successful achievement and how to work towards this, was not evident to many students. The belief that the process of learning is their entitlement was less apparent than the perception that they are completing tasks to meet teachers' expectations.

In a conversation with teaching staff, the panel heard that in two classes, the teachers have implemented approaches to seek and respond to student feedback. This has been with regards to various aspects of classroom management and learning, including the level of challenge provided, the topics to be studied and reflection on progress through the *two stars and a wish* strategy. In one instance, a student provided written feedback to his teacher letting her know that the level of challenge was too low for him and that he was left waiting for peers to finish. He reported that the teacher had responded to his feedback and that he was then provided an extension worksheet.

The opportunity to invest in the committed and amenable attitude students at Lockleys Primary School bring to class, is evident. Teaching strategies that develop ownership and understanding of purposeful learning will enable students to meet and exceed learning expectations, and reach their own potential.

#### **Direction 1**

**Enable students to engage with intellectual challenge through collective inquiry into, and consistent implementation of, pedagogy designed to develop learner expertise.**

#### **Direction 2**

**Enable student ownership of the learning process through the implementation of teaching strategies that make clear the intention of, and criteria for, successful learning, and that allow students to plan, monitor and assess their progress.**

### How well does the school make data-informed judgements about student learning?

The leader's presentation and conversations with staff made clear that the profile of data to inform planning has been raised at the school in 2016. Staff have used PAT-M and -R data to generate a data wall that identifies students' achievement levels. It was reported that this resource will be used to track student improvement after each test. In one instance, a teaching staff member informed the panel that she had used data analytically to inform her teaching, using PAT-M data to identify which aspects of number students had struggled with and what she needed to consolidate for these learners. This was new to her practice and it was apparent that she appreciated the significance of data analysis to progress achievement for the students in her class. Students taking part in Literacy Circles were of the opinion that they had been placed in groups according to not how well they scored on a test, but what they needed to learn, implying analysis of data that focused on miscues rather than score.

At the time of the review, many examples of data used to form ability groups were apparent, particularly in the area of spelling. Students reported that less able students received 'easier' or 'fewer' words than the more able students. It was explained by students that once the words were allocated to the groups, generally, all students then completed the same activities.

Some staff discussed using data to identify students who were not meeting Standards of Educational Achievement (SEA). They reported developing learning plans that identified strategies to support intervention programs for these students based on data. The notion of using data to determine opportunities for extension for students meeting or exceeding SEA, was less apparent through the review. Some examples of the provision of extra worksheets to students were evident; however, the process to determine which students require extension and what skills and understandings they can build upon, was not evident. The higher profile that is afforded data at Lockleys Primary School in 2016 provides an ideal platform from which staff can determine teaching that is responsive to diagnostic interrogation of data, and that identifies the needs of *all* learners. Lockleys Primary School is well-placed to deliver each student access to tailored and targeted teaching, every day and in every class.

Many processes throughout the review made clear that in 2016, staff have been involved in collective improvement planning. A Teaching, Learning and Assessment (TLA) team has been established to lead improvement planning. A three-year Site Improvement Plan (SIP) has been generated, and 12-month action plans for literacy, maths and wellbeing have been designed to respond to the priorities. Analysis of these documents shows that PAT data will be used to determine student growth across a 12-month period. The Review Panel commends this strategic and individualised approach to setting targets. It is not evident what data has been used to develop the SIP or action plans; and when members of the TLA discussed the process to monitor progress they informed the panel that they focus on 'what we've achieved', 'where to next' and 'what we can take off', without reference to data informing these decisions. The Review Panel acknowledges that collective improvement planning, through diagnostic use of data, is new to many staff at Lockleys Primary School, and encourages the continued focus on intentional planning, enabled through the strategically asked question, at every juncture: "What is the data telling us?"

#### Direction 3

**Meet the diverse learning needs of all students, and design and monitor whole-school improvement plans, through the analysis of valid data that informs teaching and determines improvement imperatives across the school.**

### How effectively does the school leadership foster a culture of learning?

Initial processes undertaken by the new leader at Lockleys Primary School have been designed to seek input from staff and the Governing Council as to the direction of the school, and what they can 'start', 'stop' or 'continue' doing. Processes undertaken with staff have also focused on the development of a collegiate culture, and working together in unity to support student achievement.

Systems that progress the implementation of effective practice, Professional Learning (PL) and Performance Development (PD), have been developed in 2016. Staff report that PD, termed at Lockleys Primary School as 'Performance Conversations', was based on the National Professional Standards for

Teachers (NPST) and the DECD PD proforma. Whilst most teachers discussed this rigorous approach as initially confronting, reports that the process has had a positive impact at the class level were common. Reference to NPST allowed a teacher to identify seeking student feedback as an opportunity for improvement. She researched the concept and, at the time of the review, reported four different strategies she now employs to elicit student input. The panel commends the introduction of systems that enable teachers to reflect on and develop practice that encourages staff and the leader to maintain regular and committed engagement with this professional entitlement.

In 2016, PL occurs for one hour after the staff meeting each week. Reports exhibited that topics covered have included SIP development, *growth mindsets*, *partners at play*, student engagement and the *mudman*: a vast and varied agenda. Conversations with staff made evident that time to meet together and discuss practice would be of value. The Review Panel agrees that a focused approach to PL, aligned with the most pressing aspect of the SIP, would provide high yield. Opportunities for staff to not simply share and perpetuate existing practice, but explore practice that reflects whole-school pedagogical agreements, to trial and experiment, discuss and debate, will contribute significantly to embedding coherent and effective practice across the school.

**Direction 4**

**Build teacher capacity to reflect on practice through strategically designed and focused Professional Learning and Performance Development systems that align with school priorities and pedagogical agreements.**

### OUTCOMES OF EXTERNAL SCHOOL REVIEW 2016

At Lockleys Primary School effective leadership provides strategic direction and planning and teachers are provided with structured and intentional performance development systems.

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

1. Enable students to engage with intellectual challenge through collective inquiry into, and consistent implementation of, pedagogy designed to develop learner expertise.
2. Enable student ownership of the learning process through the implementation of teaching strategies that make clear the intention of, and criteria for, successful learning, and that allow students to plan, monitor and assess their progress.
3. Meet the diverse learning needs of all students, and design and monitor whole-school improvement plans, through the analysis of valid data that informs teaching and determines improvement imperatives across the school.
4. Build teacher capacity to reflect on practice through strategically designed and focused Professional Learning and Performance Development systems that align with school priorities and pedagogical agreements.

Based on the school's current performance, Lockleys 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.

Fione Love  
PRINCIPAL  
LOCKLEYS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Governing Council Chairperson