

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

EXTERNAL SCHOOL REVIEW

REPORT FOR GLENCOE CENTRAL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Conducted in February 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 Lyn Arnold, Review Officer, Review, Improvement and Accountability Directorate and Shelley Cameron, 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 Glencoe Central Primary School has verified that the school is compliant in all applicable DECD policies.

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 93.2%, which meets the DECD target of 93%.

School context

Glencoe Central Primary School is a Reception to Year 7 school, located 448kms southeast of Adelaide and approximately 20 minutes northwest of Mount Gambier. Enrolments have remained relatively stable over time, with 76 students enrolled in 2014, 76 in 2015 and 67 in 2016.

The school has an ICSEA score of 988, and is classified as Category 5 on the DECD Index of Educational Disadvantage.

The school population includes 4% Students with Disabilities, and 30% of families eligible for School Card assistance.

The school Leadership Team consists of a Principal in the fifth year of his first 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).

The school has small cohorts in individual year levels and focuses on the tracking of individual growth and progress over time. Given the small numbers, caution should be exercised in making judgements or drawing conclusions. Consequently, in order to overcome the anomalies that may occur in any one year and minimise the possibility of identifying individuals in any small cohort of students, the data below represents a summary of aggregated data across the years 2011 to 2015.

Reading

In the early years, reading is monitored against Running Records. From 2011 to 2015, 17 of 40 (43%) Year 1 students, and 22 of 41 (54%) Year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement under the DECD Standard of Educational Achievement (SEA).

From 2011 to 2015, the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 33 of 39 (85%) Year 3, 26 of 38 (68%) Year 5, and 24 of 29 (83%) Year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement of the DECD SEA.

For 2015 Year 3 NAPLAN Reading, the school is achieving better than similar groups of students across DECD schools.

In NAPLAN Reading, from 2011 to 2015, 18 of 39 (46%) at Year 3, 11 of 38 (29%) at Year 5, and 5 of 29

(17%) at Year 7 students achieved in the top two bands.

Numeracy

From 2011 to 2015, the numeracy results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 36 of 39 (92%) Year 3 students, 25 of 38 (66%) Year 5 students and 24 of 29 (83%) Year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement under the DECD SEA.

For 2015 Years 3 and 7 NAPLAN Numeracy, the school is achieving better than similar groups of students across DECD schools.

In NAPLAN Numeracy, from 2011 to 2015, 14 of 39 (36%) Year 3 students, 6 of 38 (16%) Year 5 students, and 5 of 29 (17%) Year 7 students were in the top two bands.

Lines of Inquiry

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

Effective Teaching: To what extent are teachers' pedagogies reflective of the Teaching for Effective Learning Framework?

School Partnerships: How authentic is the influence of students on their learning and throughout the school?

To what extent does parent engagement with the school impact on student learning?

To what extent are teachers' pedagogies reflective of the Teaching for Effective Learning Framework?

The school has a regular cycle of self-review and reflection to gauge progress against the School Improvement Plan (SIP). The SIP maps out a range of approaches, strategies and targets and aligns with the Partnership Plan. The school also uses a wide range of data and assessment information to identify students needing additional support for those not achieving the SEA or the expected benchmarks identified in Negotiated Education Plans. This monitoring and tracking occurs at an individual level across the school, and appears to be highly effective in monitoring students' progress, growth and achievement over time.

Teachers are committed to the school and its students, and supportive of leadership. The Review Panel observed that, individually and collectively, staff are open to reflecting on their practice and exploring ways to move the improvement agenda forward in the school.

A particular strength of the school is that all teaching and support staff are not only prepared and willing to try new ideas and approaches, but actively seek knowledge and ideas to improve their personal practice and the learning outcomes of students. During the staff meeting with teachers and SSOs, for example, the teachers mapped their current practices against the TfEL elements outlined in Domain 2. Each teacher self-identified aspects they believe to be strengths, and any aspect they believe could be more embedded in their practice or shared more explicitly with students and parents. Together, the teachers identified the opportunity for personal and collective growth related to the elements of 'negotiated learning' and 'building a community of learners'.

Notably, the teachers' perceptions corresponded with parent and student reflections, particularly in regard to increasing opportunities for intellectual stretch and challenge across the year levels. All student groups interviewed, for example, irrespective of age or year level, expressed the view that there were times they could do more, achieve more, and would enjoy more challenge in their learning activities.

On this basis, the school will benefit from exploring strategies and approaches that support negotiated learning and the building of a community of learners that can accelerate learning and promote greater intellectual challenge in ways that meet the needs of all learners.

Direction 1

Increase the number of students achieving at the higher levels of proficiency, by creating authentic opportunities for students to engage in rigorous and challenging learning.

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

Differentiated curriculum, meaningful learning, clear feedback and goal-setting are core beliefs underscoring the school's improvement priorities, and the Review Panel found student influence on learning allied with these beliefs to be emerging in practice.

Overall, students at Glencoe Central Primary School are enthusiastic about their classroom learning. They spoke positively with the Review Panel about their teachers, perceiving them as helpful and supportive to their learning. Students also highly value the relationships they have with each other, and presented as good ambassadors for their school. In particular, the respect the students showed for each other and their school environment was noted by the Review Panel.

Considerable evidence was provided to the Panel that demonstrated student influence in school activities. Students, for example, expressed considerable involvement in, and ownership for, school-based initiatives such as the pedal prix, development of the environmental garden, and various agriculture-based activities.

In talking with students about their learning, most students were able to explain various activities and tasks, and expressed appreciation for the Non-Instructional Time (NIT) subjects, art and science. Several students spoke enthusiastically about new approaches, such as the Daily 5 being implemented in their classroom. Across all year levels most students provided generalised descriptions of learning intentions, success criteria, and ways in which they could target their learning efforts to improve achievement. Students also outlined a range of 'effort' strategies for being a good learner, such as 'work hard', 'be neat', 'listen', and 'put in the effort'. While there was less emphasis in their comments on personal mastery learning goals and targets, many students told the Review Panel that it was okay to make mistakes, and that it is the thinking not the answer that matters. Such aspects of personalised and empowered learning offer a good foundation for future work aimed at expanding and embedding the key aspects of the school's priorities.

The next step will be to develop staff and student capacity to engage in collaborative processes that promote greater student influence on their learning. Therefore, the school will benefit from creating opportunities for staff and the community to discuss and explore what authentic student influence on their learning looks like at Glencoe Central Primary School. Through this process, the school will have the opportunity to consider ways to promote greater student participation and involvement in:

- the planning, design, and assessment of their personal learning in collaboration with teachers
- opportunities for developing personal improvement targets and smart goals
- building capacity for greater complexity in thinking skills, ideas and concepts.

Through such discussions, the development of a school agreement outlining 'what we do, how we do it, and why' will provide a sound structure for ongoing capacity building and improvement linked explicitly to the school's vision and priorities, and give the community a clear outline of what a parent or student can expect to experience across the years of schooling.

Direction 2

Develop a collaborative school-wide pedagogical approach that aligns with and strengthens student influence on their learning.

To what extent does parent engagement with the school impact on student learning?

Parents are very supportive of the school. There is a sense of ownership amongst the group the panel spoke with, and good support for leadership and all the staff. Parents are enthusiastic about the new *Seesaw* app, which was trialled in late 2015 and implemented school-wide in 2016. In addition to the new app, the school uses a wide variety of communication tools such as newsletters, focus sheets, and Facebook, and is keen to explore ways to use the current app and other technologies to promote further engagement with their child's learning.

There is good support from volunteers for the LAP program, and various sporting programs, social events and fundraisers. The parents also perceive the support from SSOs for their children's learning as being outstanding. They are aware of the extra training they do, and the time and effort they put into supporting programs for all children, particularly those with special needs.

The Principal is well-respected and highly regarded by the community. In particular, the parents spoke of challenges that have been resolved through the sound leadership provided by the Principal since his appointment. The Principal, in achieving this outcome, has demonstrated a high level of commitment to the school through his focus on building trust and relationships that promote ownership of the progress and outcomes across the school.

Parents expressed interest in knowing more about what their children are learning, and the Principal is actively exploring ways to promote parents as partners. This presents an opportunity for the school community to explore ways to connect learning home-to-school and school-to-home in authentic ways. The aim of this is to develop a greater understanding of what learning students are engaging with, and how this is relevant to their world and future aspirations. These concepts can be explored through the TfEL element of 'building a community of learners' in ways that align with and support the school's improvement priority of developing the dispositions necessary to participate in a sustainable future in order to be successful citizens in a changing world.

Direction 3

Foster processes for the school and families to work together to maximise student learning and connect home-to-school and school-to-home learning in authentic ways.

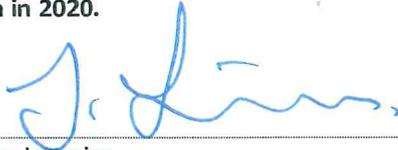
OUTCOMES OF EXTERNAL SCHOOL REVIEW 2016

Glencoe Central Primary School uses student achievement data and other evidence to inform decisions and actions at the individual student, class and whole-school level, and there is a strong culture of improvement across the school. Teachers at the school engage in ongoing individual and collaborative professional learning, and effective leadership provides strategic direction, planning and targeted interventions.

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

1. Increase the number of students achieving at the higher levels of proficiency, by creating authentic opportunities for students to engage in rigorous and challenging learning.
2. Develop a collaborative school-wide pedagogical approach that aligns with and strengthens student influence on their learning.
3. Foster processes for the school and families to work together to maximise student learning and connect home-to-school and school-to-home learning in authentic ways.

Based on the school's current performance, Glencoe Central 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.



Sam Leane
PRINCIPAL
GLENCOE CENTRAL PRIMARY
SCHOOL



Governing Council Chairperson