

# External School Review

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

## On-track evaluation report for Ocean View College

One-year return conducted in November 2018



## On-track evaluation process

A priority for the Department for Education 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 government schools.

All government schools are externally reviewed over a 3-year cycle. After the review the principal and the governing council chairperson receive a written report with a number of directions for improvement.

A copy of the External School Review report is available on the school website.

In some cases, when the review panel finds cause for concern about the levels of achievement and growth, together with evidence about the school's capacity for systematic improvement, a school will be advised that they will be visited again in a year.

Schools with a 1-year return are assisted during the intervening period by the education director and other department staff to ensure they receive coordinated, targeted and systematic support. Intervention is concentrated on building the school's capacity to improve teaching and learning across the school, lift expectations and achieve results as measured against the Department for Education Standard of Educational Achievement.

During this process, which occurs 12-15 months after the initial visit, a review panel determines the extent to which the school has, with external support, developed sustainable internal capacity to improve effectiveness and raise student achievement.

The school's priority improvement plan was the main document used as the basis for this review.

**The review visit was conducted by Kathryn Entwistle, Review Officer of the department's Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate, and Kylie Eggers and Grant Small, Review Principals.**

**This On-Track Evaluation report should be read in conjunction with the report of the External School Review conducted at Ocean View College in December 2016.**

## Directions from the External School Review report December 2016

1. **Encourage all teachers to use the TfEL Framework to develop and implement appropriate pedagogies that focus on differentiating the teaching and learning, and raising the level of achievement for all students.**
2. **Develop a B-12 strategic plan that includes a coherent and collaborative approach to implementing the Australian Curriculum.**
3. **Develop the data literacy of all teachers and leaders so that evidence of student learning can be analysed and effective intervention strategies developed and implemented.**

### Additional information about the school context

The principal started at Ocean View College in 2017, after the external school review of term 4 2016.

The college experienced a temporary drop in numbers in 2016 due to low year 12 cohort and reportedly a major incident that resulted in lower than normal year 8 enrolments. The principal advised that both year 8 and 12 numbers look positive for 2019.

Several new leaders have been appointed in 2018. A new deputy principal, head of middle school and a STEM coordinator have joined the leadership team, and reconfiguration of these roles has been established.

A \$3.5M STEM building is currently under construction, and the site has been identified as 1 of 4 state-wide to implement the Clontarf programme for Aboriginal secondary boys.

### Development of a priority improvement plan

The principal has advised that the PIP was compiled from ongoing documentation in terms of site improvements and change, evidence of involvement in partnership initiatives and learning improvement summaries. A summary of 2017 actions was produced across the year and discussed at leadership and staff meeting, and at the term 4 student free day. In term 3, the principal and deputy updated the PIP to reflect some, but not all, of the 2018 progress. Overall, the PIP was developed from regular review of the SIP and through leadership discussions.

The plan was sent to the Executive Director, Partnerships, Schools and Preschools in term 1, 2018.

### Strategic support provided to the school over the past 12 months

The principal advised that ongoing support was provided by the Learning Improvement division's (LID) primary and secondary leaders. Their strategic planning, group and individualised teacher training and planning was reportedly exemplary. Planned sessions for sub-schools, presented at student free days, were regular, and meeting times with leaders and teachers contributed to building staff capacity across the site. Meticulous documentation and minutes regarding this work were generated.

The ESR directions provided a predetermined action plan, which has contributed to leverage within the college, dictated by non-negotiable directions.

The combination of LID involvement, new leadership staff, site-employed consultants, the department's LDAM focus, and a directed SIP, are reported as influencing a significant cultural change, improved accountability and positively raised expectations of the school community.

## **Evidence and evaluation referenced to directions in the priority improvement plan.**

### **Direction 1**

**Encourage all teachers to use the TfEL Framework to develop and implement appropriate pedagogies that focus on differentiating the teaching and learning, and raising the level of achievement for all students.**

#### **On Track Evidence**

The panel found that processes to bring about pedagogical reform through the Teaching for Effective Learning (TfEL) framework have been undertaken at the school.

- LID provided intervention for teaching designed to challenge students' cognitive processing.
- Primary teachers have each undertaken to trial a domain from the framework and shared outcomes.
- The concept of safe conditions for rigorous learning (Domain 2) is widely understood and enacted through the school's new behaviour pillars.
- The concept of student agency in learning has been progressed in some learning areas, where students are provided criteria for success and access their achievement data.
- Evidence of teaching that stimulates students' critical thinking is evident through STEM and health and physical education plans and practice.
- A provocation intended to prompt teachers' reflective practice is taken from the TfEL framework and provided each day through DayMap.

The intent to bring about pedagogical reform is evident. Teachers who previously delivered teaching at their discretion now use terms such as 'low floor, high ceiling', 'real-life inquiry' and 'interdisciplinary planning'. In some learning areas, practical application of these concepts is apparent; however, this is not yet common practice and evidence of students completing worksheets and responding to closed questions was sourced.

Importance of differentiation and its place as a school priority is widely understood by teaching staff reception to year 12. Learning plan templates reference this priority and, at this point, practical responses and plans, vary greatly.

- Health and physical education tasks differed regarding entry points and opportunities to demonstrate learning is at students' discretion.
- Middle school maths teachers have designed 3 different forms of assessment that allow students to demonstrate their learning in various ways.
- PAT and NAPLAN data is increasingly used more strategically to inform teachers of students' miscues and to plan interventions.

- Some planning documents include strategic plans to differentiate learning, providing opportunities to establish prior knowledge and designing tasks that allow students access at varying levels.
- Implementation of the Talent and Potential Program (TAP) is intended to scaffold teachers to support students exceeding standards and further build their expertise.

Other evidence sourced made clear the variance of teachers' response to this direction: learning plans citing differentiation 'as required', or 'for some students', lacking specificity in design or intent. Class and learning area visits made clear that in the early years, guided reading groups have been formed in response to data indicating students' reading level, and are based on ability, not miscues. Teaching pitched at the whole class, and students required to generate a uniform product, was common.

### **Review panel evaluation**

Response to this direction is in the early stages, and requires a continued and robust focus. Concepts of pedagogical reform and the priority of differentiation have been introduced to the school and teachers can articulate this expectation across reception to year 12 and learning areas. Some systems to scaffold teachers to respond to these expectations are beginning to influence practice. Establishing agreement on teachers' understanding of differentiated planning and subsequent practice remains a priority. Sustained opportunities for regular professional learning will support the school in moving this imperative forward. Evidence shows that, in the main, the leadership team has capacity to work with teachers to refine and embed pedagogical reform across the school.

### **The revised direction for the school is:**

**Embed pedagogical agreements across the school by establishing a consistent understanding of the concept of differentiation and ongoing, rigorous professional learning regarding effective differentiated planning and practice.**

### **Direction 2**

**Develop a B-12 strategic plan that includes a coherent and collaborative approach to implementing the Australian Curriculum.**

Evidence was sourced that confirmed the profile of the Australian Curriculum (AC) has been raised at the school. Initially, the move from International Baccalaureate left some staff unclear about planning; the school's response to this direction brought about more clarity of expectations for intentional learning design. Accountability regarding this has been amplified.

- Learning plans reception to year 10 document AC content descriptors and learning outcomes, and most have recently been uploaded onto the learner management system.
- Leaders have reviewed primary years standards to inform backwards planning for improvement.
- An interdisciplinary approach to curriculum design is apparent within HPE, focusing on English achievement standards in planning.
- Professional development plans reference teachers' goals to improve curriculum knowledge.
- Some learning areas and year level cohorts have undertaken regular collaborative planning and processes of moderation.

In moving implementation of the AC forward, consultants have been employed to work with teachers. Literacy and numeracy documents have been provided, and expected planning and approaches put in

place. The panel acknowledges the school's clear intent to scaffold teachers' understanding of effective planning. Ensuring processes are designed to build teacher and leader capacity to undertake these responsibilities independently into the future, will support sustainable practice.

### **Review panel evaluation**

Staff refer to the AC when planning and most documents reflect this. Some staff clearly employ an informed and intentional approach to implementing the AC. However, an emphasis on content descriptors sees some teachers delivering teaching focused more on the development of a product or presentation, than the actual student learning outcomes within the AC achievement standards. Further scaffolded professional learning will support greater discernment regarding this concept.

In the primary years, some plans identified the use of worksheets and spelling contracts; these concepts were seen operating in some classes. Some faculty leaders access and review the quality of uploaded planning documents and support teachers to refine these as required. Monitoring the quality of teaching plans will further support effective, coherent practice across the school. Given the work that has been undertaken to date, and the initial impact, it is evident that the school is in a position to continue to implement this direction independently.

### **The revised direction for the school is:**

**Strengthen the positive impact that teaching plans have on student learning, through collective exploration into the application of AC learning outcomes in planning, and then ensuring leaders regularly monitor the quality of these documents.**

### **Direction 3**

**Develop the data literacy of all teachers and leaders so that evidence of student learning can be analysed and effective intervention strategies developed and implemented.**

### **On-track evidence**

Response to this direction was clearly evident. Most staff reported that leaders raising the profile of data has been the most significant change within the last 18 months. Outcomes and initiatives include:

- Data is available to all teaching staff, and expectations regarding their access to this are in place.
- Leaders have attended professional learning on PAT assessments, and most have led staff through processes that develop their capacity to analyse the results.
- Some teachers use NAPLAN question analysis to inform teaching points.
- HPE staff analyse PAT data to inform them of students' comprehension skills and plan accordingly.
- A data schedule has been developed, and expectations of assessments documented.
- SACE data has been used to identify writing as a priority, and is used to determine exam readiness and appropriate responses.

Staff are beginning to refine the intentional use of data in addressing students' needs. Access to intervention programs is determined by data and students who are not at SEA are supported through plans designed in response to their achievement data. At the wave 1 level, teaching specifically informed by analysis of achievement data is not yet widely apparent. Formation of ability groups is common, as is teaching pitched to the whole class. The capacity teachers have to use data diagnostically is evidently varied across the school.

## **Review panel evaluation**

The school's response to direction 3 has been intentionally undertaken and began to impact some planning and practice. All staff appreciate the significance of data in supporting students to maximise their potential. Systems that enable staff to access data are in place and expectations widely understood. Developing data literacy of teaching staff affected some learning areas and indicates the school's capacity to continue this work. Regular, internal forums to engage in collaborative data analysis will be critical in scaffolding all teachers to respond to students' achievement data. In continuing this work without external intervention, all leaders need to ensure their data literacy is refined to the point where they are able to build the capacity of teaching staff. Using models already operating successfully in some faculties, and replicating this across the school, will support a more consistent approach to this concept.

### **The revised direction for the school is:**

**Ensure intentional teaching across all learning areas and year levels by strengthening the data literacy of all teachers and leaders, through regular and strategic forums that build their capacity to understand and respond to student achievement data.**

## Outcomes of the on-track evaluation

Based on the evidence provided, Ocean View College is on track to effectively implement the External School Review directions.

School priorities have been clearly articulated by the executive leadership team and expectations are widely understood. Staff discuss the '3 Ds': Differentiation, Documentation and Data, as the school's improvement imperatives. The new leader has clearly responded to the original ESR directions with strategic intent and determination.

The review panel found that:

A culture focused on learning is now apparent at the school. Expectations regarding high-yield approaches to planning and teaching are in place, and staff are gradually implementing these. The significance of regular and dedicated forums that scaffold teachers to implement agreed practice and respond to expectations cannot be understated. Effective leadership from learning area coordinators and heads of school will be pivotal in ensuring the school continues to improve practice and raise student achievement.

The principal will continue to work with the education director to implement the External School Review directions.

**Based on current performance, Ocean View College will be externally reviewed again in 2021.**



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Tony Lunniss  
DIRECTOR  
REVIEW, IMPROVEMENT AND  
ACCOUNTABILITY



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Anne Millard  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
PARTNERSHIPS, SCHOOLS AND  
PRESCHOOLS

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Chris Brandwood  
PRINCIPAL  
Ocean View College

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Governing Council Chairperson