

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

EXTERNAL SCHOOL REVIEW
REPORT FOR MANNUM COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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 Liz Matheson, Review Officer, Review, Improvement and Accountability Directorate and Julie Taylor, 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 Mannum Community College 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 89.3%, which is below the DECD target of 93%.

School context

Mannum Community College caters for children and young people from Reception to Stage 2 SACE. It is situated 85 kilometres north-east of the Adelaide CBD on the River Murray. The enrolment in 2015 was 393 students. The school is classified as Category 2 on the DECD Index of Educational Disadvantage. The school's ICSEA score in 2014 was 947. The local ECD Partnership is Murraylands.

The school population includes 11.2% Aboriginal students, 9.2% Students with Disabilities, 37.6% of families eligible for School Card assistance, 6.9% students of Non-English Speaking Background (NESB), and 8 students under the Guardianship of the Minister (GoM). Enrolment has fluctuated over the last 5 years.

There are 3 sub-schools: Junior School (Reception to Year 5); Middle School (Years 6 to 9) and Senior School (Years 10 to 12).

The school Leadership Team consists of a Principal in the 2nd year of her tenure at the school, and 2 Senior Leaders: Junior School and Middle School. There is also a SACE/VET Coordinator and a Reception to Year 12 Counsellor. There are 26.5FTE teachers including 8 in the early years of their career.

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, 71% of Year 1 and 74% of Year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement under the DECD Standard of Educational Achievement (SEA). This result represents an improvement from the historic baseline average. Between 2013 and 2015, the trend for Years 1 and 2 has been upwards from 54% and 46% respectively in 2013.

In 2015, the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 83% of Year 3 students, 26% of Year 5 students, 73% of Year 7 and 59% of Year 9 students demonstrated the expected achievement in relation to the DECD SEA. For Years 3 and 7 this result represents an improvement from the historic baseline average. For Year 9 there was little or no improvement, and for Year 5 there was a decline in relation to the historic baseline average.

Between 2013 and 2015, the trend for Years 3, 7 and 9 has been upwards, from 48%, 50% and 48% in 2013, to 83%, 73% and 59% respectively in 2015.

For 2015 Year 3, 7 and 9 NAPLAN Reading, the school was within the expected results of similar students across DECD schools. Year 5 results were significantly lower than the expected results of similar students.

In 2015, 20% of Year 3, 4% of Year 5, 8% of Year 7 and 6% of Year 9 students achieved in the top two

NAPLAN Reading bands. For Year 3 this result represents a decline from the historic baseline average.

For those students who achieved in the top two NAPLAN proficiency bands in Reading, 1 of 4 students from Year 3 remained in the upper bands at Year 5 in 2015. The retention in the upper bands from Year 3 in 2011 to Year 7 in 2015 was 2 of 4 students, and from Year 3 in 2009 to Year 9 in 2015 was 0 of 4 students.

Numeracy

In 2015, the numeracy results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 83% of Year 3 students, 39% of Year 5 students, 58% of Year 7 students and 65% of Year 9 students demonstrated the expected achievement in relation to the DECD SEA. For Years 3 and 9 this result represents an improvement from the historic baseline average. For Years 5 and 7 this result represents a decline from the historic baseline average.

Between 2013 and 2015, the trend for Years 3 and 9 has been upwards, from 52% and 56% in 2013 to 83% and 65% in 2015. For Year 3 numeracy in 2015, the school achieved higher than the results of similar groups of students across DECD schools.

In 2015, 11% of Year 3, 4% of Year 5, 7% of Year 7 and 6% of Year 9 students achieved in the top two NAPLAN Numeracy bands. The retention in the upper bands from Year 3 in 2011 to Year 7 in 2015 was 0 of 1 student, and from Year 3 in 2009 to Year 9 in 2015 was 1 of 3 students.

SACE

In terms of SACE completion in 2015, 18 of 22 students who had the potential to complete their SACE did go on to successfully achieve their SACE. In 2015, 89% of grades achieved in SACE Stage 2 were C- or higher. This result represents a 3-year upward trend from 77% in 2013.

Between 2013 and 2015, the school had improvements in the percentage of students at Stage One achieving in business and mathematics, and a decline in arts, health and physical education, and science. With low student numbers at Stage Two, it is not possible to make subject-grade comparisons.

In terms of the compulsory Stage One Literacy, Numeracy and Personal Learning Plan, 100% of students achieved success.

Lines of Inquiry

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

Student Learning:	To what extent are students engaged and intellectually challenged in their learning and how do you know?
Effective Leadership:	How well does the leadership facilitate the development of high quality curriculum planning and effective teaching?
Effective Teaching:	How effectively are teachers supporting students in their learning?

To what extent are students engaged and intellectually challenged in their learning and how do you know?

The Mannum Community College vision aims to “offer a safe, yet challenging school program that develops all students as successful, lifelong, resilient learners with respect for themselves, others and the environment.”

An analysis of the school’s achievement data shows that many students are meeting or exceeding the Standard of Educational Achievement. In most year levels there is a three-year upward trend in the results; however, the percentage of students achieving in higher bands or receiving As or Bs does not show the same trends. Furthermore, some students achieved in the upper bands in Year 3, but by the time they have

reached Year 5, 7 or 9, they are no longer demonstrating the higher-level proficiencies. The Review Panel was keen to explore the extent that students are engaged and intellectually stretched across the school.

The school is also concerned about the level of engagement and stretch to be able to realise its vision. This is evident from the School Improvement Plan 2015-2017, which seeks to promote the notion of “powerful learners” and a “growth mindset” to support students to continue to set higher targets for their learning. Teachers were asked what was meant by “powerful learners.” A group of teachers talked about their aim to develop students who want to learn and know how to learn. They are developing resilience in students so that they will stay the course when tasks get harder and more complex.

Teachers and students provided some examples of how they are developing a growth mindset. Junior Primary children in one class said that it is better to think: “I can always improve so I will keep trying”, than to say to yourself: “It’s good enough.” In another example, students advised they ask themselves the question: “Is it really my best work?” rather than say: “I can’t make it any better”. The students showed the Review Panel work exemplars, which clearly displayed the students’ understanding of what ‘better’ work looked like. One example was the writing ladder supporting students to produce correct punctuation and to produce sentences with describing words. Another example was titled: ‘rate your picture’, encouraging students to add more detail and background.

Students reported they found the inquiry pedagogy, used in science and history, to be engaging. Teachers use the scientific method by getting students to hypothesise, conduct experiments, suggest an explanation for the scientific question, and then research to find the scientific reasons from various sources. In history, students also liked the inquiry question, and that teachers hook them in by finding out what they already know. Many students like to understand and to be engaged in the practical application of what they are learning. The Review Panel observed that teachers are trying to use authentic examples so that students can see how the skills and knowledge they are learning relate to their context.

Peer tutoring is common practice at Mannum Community School. Students talked about the benefits of explaining something to a peer, as it also helped them be clear on the concept or skill. They often provide examples that other students connect with. Peer tutoring was seen as an opportunity to work together.

Most students were aware of their reading levels or of how they are going through the use of the ‘traffic light’ system. The Review Panel was informed that some students in SACE had ‘lifted their game’ after seeing that a number of teachers had indicated they were red on the traffic lights for several subjects. Parents appreciated the reporting of their child’s progress through the traffic light system, as it meant they were being regularly tracked and monitored.

Students were also asked about practices that did not add value to their learning. From Year 4 upwards, students referred to copying from the board as being a waste of time, even though it appeared not to be an infrequent practice. In interviews with the Review Panel, a number of students reported they were bored. This seemed to be more common in the upper year-level of composite classes (for example, Year 5s in a 4-5 class). They indicated they had done some of the work in the previous year. Some parents, while pleased with the school, affirmed they thought that students could be stretched more. They also reported concern about the engagement and drive of students, particularly in the middle years.

The school has 3 lessons time-tabled a week to explicitly address wellbeing and pastoral care. These lessons focus on anti-bullying, friendships and development of relationships. In general, students who are engaged and motivated are more likely to want to be at school, and these factors are linked strongly to high expectations, growth mindsets, and resilience to tackle challenging learning tasks. Many teachers are developing or use these practices to achieve this outcome. They need to become an embedded part of daily practice.

Direction 1

Realise the school’s vision, by strengthening and embedding pedagogical strategies that develop resilience for challenging learning into daily practice, while maintaining high expectations.

How well does the leadership facilitate the development of high quality curriculum planning and effective teaching?

The Learning Improvement division within the Office for Education and Child Development has articulated the key work of teachers as being “effective and intentional learning designers, understanding each learner’s starting point, engaging and challenging every learner and maximising the learning growth and achievement of every learner, every year.”

The school has developed a cycle of improvement, which is visible and understood by staff and the Governing Council. A key strategic element of this work has been the analysis and use of data. The data (achievement and perception) has been used to inform the development of the School Improvement Plan. Evaluation of programs and tracking and monitoring of student progress is ongoing. Teachers know their students; they could name students not meeting the DECD standards, and also those in the higher bands. Many students, including in Junior Primary, knew their reading levels. The school has established a Student Review Team to enable a case management approach to support individual students.

For teachers to be effective and intentional learning designers, they need to be cognisant of what their students know and can do, and also have an understanding of the relevant achievement standards and performance standards in the Australian Curriculum and SACE curriculum frameworks. During the review, teachers were asked to articulate their learning intentions for a current unit of work and the basis for determining those learning intentions. The responses varied in specificity and understanding. Some teachers referenced their learning intentions to the relevant curriculum framework, and showed that they scan year-levels below and above to be able to tailor their learning programme to the assessed needs. One teacher in the senior school aimed for students to gain a deep understanding of the topic content, and the literacy requirements, to meet the assessment criteria. Some teachers focused on the more narrow content of the Australian Curriculum, whereas others referred to learning dispositions and behaviours as their learning intentions.

The Review Panel was told that the Professional Development (PD) and advice teachers had received in previous years in relation to the Australian Curriculum was somewhat confusing and contradictory. The PD had consisted of one-off staff meetings, rather than an opportunity for deeper and ongoing learning, implementation and reflection. The Review Panel also wondered whether there was a common understanding amongst staff of terms such as ‘standards’, ‘targets’, ‘outcomes’, ‘bands’, and ‘formative and summative assessment’. In the middle and senior years, Mannum Community College has several teachers who are solely responsible for their curriculum area. This makes it more challenging to have reflective discussions with colleagues to ensure a common understanding of the curriculum overviews and standards.

The school is working towards developing and documenting common agreements and expectations to provide curriculum coherence for students. The Review Panel concluded that collaborative work in deepening their common understanding of the curriculum frameworks and standards would help build the capacity of teachers to be effective and intentional learning designers. It will also provide greater coherence of the curriculum from the lens of the learner as they progress through school.

Direction 2

Provide a coherent and targeted curriculum for learners and work collaboratively to deepen teachers’ understanding and use of the curriculum to design learning intentions for students.

How effectively are teachers supporting students in their learning?

The use of formative assessment practices was common across the school. Teachers talked about their professional learning in formative assessment. Students were able to describe how teachers checked in with them to ascertain whether they knew what to do or were ‘on track.’ Formative assessment is a critical process, enabling teachers to find out if students have misconceptions or need correction and assisting them in mastering a skill. This is an ongoing process and enables teachers to take immediate action to

support individuals or groups of students. Formative assessment allows for informed, targeted and timely intervention within the classroom context. Teachers are encouraged to strengthen this practice.

Summative assessment requires teachers to be clear on their learning intentions, based on curriculum standards as described above, and to tailor their programme to the students' current levels of knowledge and proficiency. It allows them to backwards-plan, design their programme, tailor and target their pedagogical practices.

The school leadership has developed the expectation that teachers design a daily, weekly and termly programme. This expectation has been controversial with some staff. The analysis of student achievement data shows that teachers have a wide range of achievement levels within their class. For this reason, teachers need to plan how they are going to tailor their teaching to target these varied needs on a daily basis.

Most teachers at the school use explicit and transparent summative assessment criteria to show students what is expected of them to achieve grades. Students reported they found this very useful, especially when teachers explained the criteria or wrote them in student-friendly language. During the review process, teachers had an opportunity to critique each other's assessment criteria and to examine the alignment between the learning intentions and the criteria. They reported this process was helpful in clarifying their planning and assessment.

An analysis of the grades allocated from Year 1 to 12 over two semester periods, and triangulation with the NAPLAN, SACE and PAT testing, suggests there is a need for greater consistency in grading student work. The school has started initial work on 'transforming tasks', with the aim of designing the task to enable students to stretch themselves and demonstrate understanding and proficiencies commensurate with an A or B standard. This work will also require a clear alignment between the learning intentions, teachers' tailored programme, the effectiveness of their pedagogies and the assessment task and criteria.

Direction 3

Maximise the progress of each student by providing alignment between the learning intentions, planning, pedagogies, assessment tasks, criteria and consistent grading.

OUTCOMES OF EXTERNAL SCHOOL REVIEW 2016

Mannum Community College has a clear cycle of improvement incorporating data analysis and use to inform strategic planning and decisions. The school self-reviews and evaluates its programs and processes to determine their impact on student learning and engagement. Student achievement shows an upward trend in most year levels. Teachers know their students and many use assessment to inform their planning. The school is working towards documenting common agreements and expectations to provide curriculum coherence for students.

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

1. Realise the school's vision, by strengthening and embedding pedagogical strategies that develop resilience for challenging learning into daily practice, while maintaining high expectations.
2. Provide a coherent and targeted curriculum for learners and work collaboratively to deepen teachers' understanding and use of the curriculum to design learning intentions for students.
3. Maximise the progress of each student by providing alignment between the learning intentions, planning, pedagogies, assessment tasks, criteria and consistent grading.

Based on the school's current performance, Mannum Community College 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.



Sue Record
PRINCIPAL
MANNUM COMMUNITY COLLEGE



Governing Council Chairperson