

Department for Education External School Review

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

Report for Rendelsham Primary and Preschool

Conducted in September 2021



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

This review was conducted by Simon Harding, Review Officer of the department's Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate and Belinda Smith, Review Principal.

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
- Discussions with:
 - Governing Council representatives
 - Parent group
 - School Services Officers (SSOs)
 - Student representatives
 - Teachers.

School context

Rendelsham Primary and Preschool caters for students from preschool to year 7. It is situated 420kms from the Adelaide CBD. The enrolment in 2021, as at the February census, is 26. Enrolment at the time of the previous review was 27. The local partnership is South East Coast.

The school has a 2020 ICSEA score of 989 and is classified as Category 6 on the Department for Education Index of Educational Disadvantage.

The school population includes no Aboriginal students, 27% students with disabilities, no students with English as an additional language or dialect (EALD) background, 8% children/young people in care and 26% of students eligible for School Card assistance.

The school leadership team consists of a Principal in the 4th year of tenure.

There are 4 teachers including 1 in the early years of their career and 2 step 9 teachers.

The previous ESR or OTE directions were:

- Direction 1** **Strengthen, embed and document ongoing self-review processes for teaching and learning as integral components of staff meetings and regularly share this work with students and the community.**
- Direction 2** **Strengthen and embed authentic student influence for learning across all year levels and learning areas, including embedding the language of learning and assessment with students and their families.**
- Direction 3** **Strengthen and embed learning design and moderation processes to ensure that all students are provided with regular opportunities to be challenged across all learning areas.**

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

Evidence was provided at the Principal and teacher discussions on how the previous directions have influenced the school's improvement work over time. There have been some recent changes in staff which has impacted on the continuity of this work however the school has worked towards the use of clear expectations of practice. This is supported through the development of a statement of practice in literacy and teachers are currently working on a statement of practice in numeracy. Staff work collegiately to share their practice and value the opportunities to learn from each other. Staff meeting time is provided to support this work.

Teachers are working with students when goal setting. There are expectations for students to have a writing and number goal which they can talk about. Teachers also talked about supporting students in using the language of learning and empowering them to share their work with parents through electronic media.

The school has put in place strategies to support moderation processes both across the site and with partnership schools. Professional learning has supported the introduction of expected practices which support the SIP goals. Professional learning communities (PLCs) have been established and in 2021 have specific focus on pedagogy in the early years and learning design in the primary years. Each of these PLCs is supported by a consultant in an ongoing way which has been valued by the staff and impacted positively on classroom practice.

Lines of inquiry

Effective school improvement planning

How effectively does the school monitor and enhance its improvement strategies and actions based on their impact on student learning?

There is a focus on, and a culture of, improvement in both building capacity of staff and outcomes for students. Staff opinions and feedback are valued. This is seen through the collective analysis of data to determine priorities for improvement and when monitoring progress of the school improvement plan (SIP). Decisions are informed by agreed datasets, where targets reflect high expectations for achievement. Tracking of individual student learning growth is the approach the school prioritises to inform next steps. Staff have opportunities to meet with colleagues and value participating in reflective conversations and sharing practice when measuring the impact of actions taken. Regular staff meeting time is allocated for professional learning aligned to the priorities and to collaboratively plan next steps. Governing council demonstrated a good understanding of the priorities in the SIP and shared how information on the progress of the plan is provided through regular updates at meetings. Parents trust the leadership and staff to make decisions necessary in relation to improvement.

Staff demonstrated their commitment to and responsibility in monitoring the impact of the plan. Teachers and leadership work together to develop and implement a common approach to teaching in the priority area. The school has strategically taken decisions to keep the improvement focus narrow. Teachers acknowledged that timelines are adjusted to effectively work towards achieving the goal. Careful consideration is taken in aligning the professional learning undertaken by staff and their professional development plans (PDPs) with the SIP priorities. Leadership and staff value the ongoing training and support provided through the Literacy Coach and its impact on teaching and learning in literacy. There is a strong culture of collegiality across the staff team and a willingness to learn from each other through regular sharing of practice. Staff value opportunities to work with staff from other sites focusing on the SIP priorities and articulated how they have incorporated new approaches into their practice. Strengthening monitoring of progress using the challenges of practice and clear success criteria as measures of improvement planning and implementation, will support the school to effectively achieve their identified goals.

Direction 1 Continue to build the capacity of staff to monitor and evaluate the plans of action using the challenges of practice and success criteria in the SIP as measures.

Conditions for effective student learning

To what extent does the school promote a culture of learning with high expectations of achievement for all learners?

It was evident that leadership and staff have a high level of commitment and collective responsibility to build their own capacity through self-reflection and professional learning. They also focus on building the capacity of students to be successful and motivated learners. The school has recently established a new school motto - 'Village of Learners'. Staff are willing to take on new challenges and innovation in teaching practice and are clearly integral to decisions taken. Teachers are keen to learn from each other and willingly share their practice. The leadership team have clear and high expectations of themselves and others and work alongside staff and model the implementation of expected practices. Staff PDPs are closely aligned to the SIP.

Professional learning communities (PLCs) have provided the opportunity for teachers to work collaboratively with colleagues alongside consultants which has been valued by staff. Leadership has clear expectations and accountability measures in relation to the work of the PLCs. Staff are sharing strategies and practice, building an increasing understanding of each other's work and a consistency of practice. Aligning the work of the PLCs with the SIP priorities will continue to strengthen the impact of the improvement focus.

Teachers talked about the collective responsibility they have for all students in the school. There are points in the week that teachers work with all students, supporting their knowledge of the learning needs across the school. The tracking of individual student learning growth is increasingly informing teaching and learning. Students understand the importance of effective feedback to know how to improve. Students are aware that teachers are using data to form groups for learning and where necessary 'fill the gaps' in their learning. They are seeking increased feedback to inform their next steps in learning. Parents stated that staff are willing to provide effective communication about their child's learning in a variety of ways and they are supportive of the teachers and their work. They believe the reporting processes in place, both formal and informal, provide them with a good understanding of their child's progress. While there is good practice, continuing to build common high impact practices in two-way feedback and the setting of individual learning goals which are regularly reflected upon are next steps the school is well placed to undertake.

Direction 2 Strengthen common evidence-based practices in effective two-way feedback and students taking increasing responsibility for their progression of learning by being clear about their next steps.

Outcomes of the External School Review 2021

There is a strong positive school culture which is encompassed through the school's new motto 'Village of Learners'. Staff work collectively and take responsibility for the learning of all students in the school. Parents value the dedication of the staff and learning opportunities provided for their children.

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

- Direction 1** **Continue to build the capacity of staff to monitor and evaluate the plans of action using the challenges of practice and success criteria in the SIP as measures.**
- Direction 2** **Strengthen common evidence-based practices in effective two-way feedback and students taking increasing responsibility for their progression of learning by being clear about their next steps.**

Based on the school's current performance, Rendelsham Primary and Preschool will be externally reviewed again in 2024.



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Governing Council Chairperson

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).

In considering the data below there needs to be some caution in making a judgement due to the low numbers represented in the student cohorts at the school. This is done for two reasons: to overcome the anomalies that may occur in any one year and to minimise the possibility of identifying individuals in any small cohort of students. The data below represents a summary of the aggregated data from Rendelsham Primary and Preschool from 2016-2019.

Reading

In the early years reading progress is monitored against Running Records. From 2016 to 2019, 55% of year 1 and 67% of year 2 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA.

From 2016 to 2019, the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 73% of year 3 students, 85% of year 5 students, and 78% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA.

From 2016 to 2019, 47% of year 3, 31% of year 5 and 11% of year 7 achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN reading bands.

Numeracy

From 2016 to 2019, the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 80% of year 3 students, 85% of year 5 students, and 78% of year 7 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA.

From 2016 to 2019, 27% of year 3, 8% of year 5, and 22% of year 7 achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN numeracy bands.