

EXTERNAL SCHOOL REVIEW

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools Division

Report for Salisbury East High School

Conducted in July 2017



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.

The External School Review Process includes verification by the Principal that key DECD policies are adhered to and implemented. This information is provided in Appendix One of the report.

This External School Review was conducted by Liz Schneyder, Review Officer, Review, Improvement and Accountability Directorate and Warren Symonds and Neil White, Review Principals.

School context

Salisbury East High School had 621 students in 2016 and has 636 students in 2017. This data indicates a stabilization of enrolments which had been steadily declining from 697 in 2013. The school has an ICSEA value of 948 and is classified as Category 4 on the DECD Index of Educational Disadvantage. The local ECD Partnership is Salisbury.

The school population includes 5% Aboriginal students, 10% students with disabilities, 10% of students with English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EALD), 8 young people in care, and 22% families eligible for School Card assistance.

The school Leadership Team consists of a Principal in the first year of their first tenure, a Deputy Principal, 2 Assistant Principals and 12 Coordinators. There are 51 teachers, including 6 in the early years of their career, and 21 School Services Officers (SSOs).

Lines of Inquiry

In considering the data summary in the School Performance Overview (Appendix 2) and the Principal's presentation, the Review Panel explored the following Lines of Inquiry to evaluate the school's effectiveness towards raising student achievement and sustaining high performance. During the external review process, the panel focused on three key areas from the External School Review Framework:

Effective Teaching:	To what extent does the school cater for the varied needs of learners?
Effective Leadership:	To what extent is collective responsibility and collective action evident amongst school leaders?
Improvement Agenda:	How well are the results of data and evidence translated into targeted actions?

To what extent does the school cater for the varied needs of learners?

Salisbury East High School current Site Improvement Plan (SIP) focuses on improvement in learning for all students, especially their literacy and numeracy and the use of 21st Century pedagogical practices across the whole school, to better engage and challenge all students and encourage improved attendance. This is in response to data indicating limited or inconsistent growth in literacy, numeracy and attendance of students over a number of years. There has been a decline in the performance of high-band students in Year 9 NAPLAN, and students generally perform below similar students in other DECD schools. There has, however, been some improvement in the number of students completing their SACE in 2016, and in the achievement of 'A' and 'B' grades in the 2016 SACE.

In 2017, the school introduced a new middle school structure with different pedagogical practices, where students are taught by fewer teachers and some collaborative teaching is being trialled. New learning spaces provide flexibility and encourage this collaboration. There has also been a whole-school focus on literacy improvement, including the appointment of effective leaders in English and humanities teams, and the implementation of a range of intervention programs and processes, including the Year 9 Literacy class, the EAL classes in the Middle School and the WAVE room, where students with a Negotiated Education Plan (NEP) can access individual support. Leaders are looking to introduce literacy and numeracy software applications that facilitate individualised learning, while a team of SSOs also provide in-class support for all students with a NEP. A renewed focus on numeracy is a priority, while there is a concern amongst some teachers about the digital literacy of many students, which is being addressed by the ICT team.

Student Services and Area of Study leaders consistently review subject offerings at all year levels to ensure all students have a suitable pathway that meets their interests. For example, SACE Health has been introduced and is attracting increased enrolments: two Stage 2 merits were awarded in 2016. Increasing numbers of students are enrolling in VET courses from Year 10, some of which are supporting an ATAR pathway, while

students are also able to enrol in subjects offered across the Northern Adelaide State Secondary Schools Alliance (NASSSA) network, when enrolments in subjects such as Specialist Maths are too small in individual schools to make them viable. Extra assistance, including boot camp, is being offered by the senior school wellbeing team to ensure all students complete their Personal Learning Plan (PLP), Research Project and other compulsory subjects. The Student Support Centre (SSC) provides students with access to individual support to complete assignments.

The passion of a number of teachers, and their positive relationships with their students, was very evident in interviews and referred to by students. All Year 8 students were recently surveyed to determine whether the school should continue to expect all students to study a full year of Languages Other Than English (LOTE). There was an overwhelmingly positive response from students, based on their enjoyment of lessons, which are challenging as well as fun. They have a clear understanding of the learning intentions and they appreciate the commitment of their LOTE teachers. Students also talked enthusiastically about the opportunities provided through the special entry programs in the arts, sport and Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), and the broad range of other extra-curricular opportunities provided, including through the International Student Program.

The pedagogy used by some teachers continues to be traditional and teacher-directed, with a large number of assessment tasks in some Areas of Study impacting on the enjoyment of, and engagement in, lessons. The Principal explained that the inclusion of a focus on 21st Century pedagogical practices in the SIP, is a strategy to challenge all teachers and leaders to reflect, individually and collectively, on the effectiveness of their pedagogical and assessment practices, and their impact on the challenge and engagement experienced by all students. Senior students believe most teachers do stretch them, but tracking of the high-achieving middle school students indicated a decline in their achievement over time.

The school's executive leaders are committed to implementing STEM, including inquiry based learning, to increase opportunities for all students to be challenged. While the new STEM facility is yet to be completed, some teachers in the arts and design and technology areas are already trialling some STEM pedagogies, including the use of recently purchased drones and cameras to challenge and engage their students. Students in the special entry STEM and engineering classes are also involved in engineering challenges organised through the University of South Australia.

The school has also introduced a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) program. There has been significant investment in improving the school's ICT infrastructure, including internet speed, and more training is planned for all teachers to become confident users of ICT in their lessons, where multi-modal assessment, innovative and contemporary tasks design and inquiry based learning are expected to become common practice. There is some 'flipped classroom' pedagogy being used in design and technology and STEM classes. The ICT leaders have developed a comprehensive plan for the future roll-out of ICT in the school, which will be shared with staff shortly.

The Salisbury East Alternative Learning (SEAL) program was introduced 3 years ago to provide relevant learning opportunities for students disengaged from mainstream schooling, but not eligible for Flexible Learning Options (FLO). There are two classes of students, one for middle school and the other for senior school students. Some of these students return to mainstream schooling, but most appreciate the 1:1 support and mentoring, and the individualised programs provided through this alternative program. Leaders in the SEAL team have recently completed a risk assessment to use Google Classrooms and believe this will have a significantly positive impact on the effectiveness of these individualised programs. Data is indicating significant success in retaining these students at school, improving their attendance, and literacy and numeracy. Some complete their SACE, including the Research Project, while VET opportunities and accreditation are popular. Increasing and sustained community support for the program, including the provision of work placements, is critical for its success and has been appreciated. The ongoing support of the Beacon Foundation has also been appreciated.

Aboriginal students and students with disabilities are also well-supported by highly effective teams, with SACE completion encouraged. There are almost 50 chronic non-attending students enrolled in off-campus FLO programs, with their pathways, attendance and achievement monitored by leaders in the SEAL team. SACE completion is an option for some of these students.

Direction 1

Support the use of differentiated pedagogical practices by teachers that engage and challenge all students.

Direction 2

Implement a whole-school focus on literacy, numeracy and ICT.

To what extent is collective responsibility and collective action evident amongst school leaders?

Salisbury East High School has lost a number of experienced leaders over the past 12 months. The Principal is in his first 12 months in the role, with many other leaders also beginning new roles in 1-year tenured positions. The Principal believes it is a priority for him to make the leadership structure long-term, with 5-year appointments so that the key future directions of the school will be implemented by a cohesive and committed team. Most current leaders indicated support for the new Principal and his vision for the future, while those in one-year positions are keen to be part of the school's future.

Many current job and person specifications of leaders do not reflect the Principal's vision, and clarity of roles and expectations is being asked for by both teachers and the leaders. However, a number of teachers confirmed high levels of leadership and encouragement already exist in some Areas of Study, evidenced by the collective commitment of teachers in collaborative moderation, ongoing review of task design and sharing of good practice and resources. There has been a consequential increase in enrolments in subjects, improved A-E data, and engagement of students. Almost all teachers indicated they appreciate and enjoy the collegiality of their peers.

Many current and aspiring leaders indicated their enjoyment of professional programs and are looking for more involvement in the future. There are also plans for increased formal mentoring of all leaders once the leadership structure is finalised, with most leaders enthusiastic. Difficult conversations with underperforming staff are also occurring.

There is a strong sense of cohesiveness evident amongst the wellbeing faculty leaders and teams, including the ATSI and SWD teams. The introduction of a sub-school model in 2017 is already resulting in some increased connectivity between these teams and the Area of Study teams, as they collectively focus on addressing the school priorities, collaborative teaching, increasing student voice in their learning, and the quality of teaching and learning.

All staff appreciate the support from the Executive Leadership Team to engage in relevant Professional Learning opportunities, including programs offered through the ECD Partnership and NASSSA. While there is not yet a formal process for staff to provide feedback to colleagues about their learning, the programs are beginning to have some positive impact in some Areas of Study on the depth of professional conversations about student learning.

Direction 3

Ensure leadership roles are aligned to school priorities and staff are provided with opportunities to share their professional learning with other staff.

How well are the results of data and evidence translated into targeted actions?

Impressive datasets are available to all teachers and leaders. They are produced by an SSO under the leadership of the Deputy Principal, and mostly available on DayMap. It is an expectation that leaders will use the data to encourage discussion in Area of Study meetings about the achievement of students in their classes and strategies for improving their learning, particularly in numeracy, literacy and attendance. It is also an expectation that leaders will monitor how their team uses the datasets provided, through line management meetings.

It was apparent that there has been use of this data by some teachers, who could discuss the achievement and capacity of students in their classes, including the latest NAPLAN and SACE results. Others are sharing data with colleagues in the feeder primary schools mainly through involvement in ECD Partnership meetings and are looking for more efficient processes to access this information.

Leaders are able to triangulate Student Wellbeing data, NAPLAN/PAT/SACE data and A-E grades. Leaders admitted to needing more support in analysing data, and developing and implementing strategies to address

the implications. They are also looking for further professional learning in the management of the subsequent difficult conversations with some teachers. Relevant teams and leaders are using A-E data to determine Grade Point Averages and award winners who are recognised in assemblies. Students particularly value awards provided at these assemblies for attendance.

The panel was impressed with the evidence made available by leaders of the senior school about the tracking of students who do not go on to complete their SACE. They have been proactive in accessing data to regularly review the courses offered to senior students to ensure options are available to meet all pathways. The introduction of Health at Stage 1 and now at Stage 2 has been a positive outcome, while maths and science teachers and leaders are being encouraged to analyse latest data to determine how to increase SACE enrolments and achievement, and improve the numeracy of students.

Work is in progress to electronically track student wellbeing, attendance, intervention processes and student pathways through DayMap. Improved use of the capacity of DayMap across the whole school, including the SEAL team, was encouraged by the Review Panel, while timely access by all teachers to Year 7 data, and more efficient recording of attendance data was recommended.

There has been a Performance Development Program (PDP) in place for a number of years that has included peer observations and student feedback. Recent changes of leadership have limited the effectiveness of the program. Students admitted to providing little feedback to teachers, while a number of teachers indicated a desire to be more regularly involved in line-management, formal mentoring and feedback processes, from students, their peers and leaders. Teachers are currently not expected to include data about the achievement of their students in their performance plan, and conversations about student achievement are not common practice in most line management meetings. Including support staff in the PDP process is regarded by the Principal as critical in ensuring a cohesive and inclusive approach to the achievement of school priorities.

Direction 4

Enhance the Performance Development Program to focus on student learning and achievement for all teachers, support staff and learners.

OUTCOMES OF EXTERNAL SCHOOL REVIEW 2017

Salisbury East High School has experienced significant changes in its Executive Leadership Team which has It is also evident that the new Leadership Team is intent on providing strategic directions, planning and targeted interventions to move the school forward and improve student achievement. Teachers are appreciating the structured time provided for ongoing collaborative professional learning in most areas of study, and there is a coherent and engaging curriculum for students, using the Australian Curriculum and SACE.

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

1. Support the use of differentiated pedagogical practices by teachers that engage and challenge all students.
2. Implement a whole-school focus on literacy, numeracy and ICT.
3. Ensure leadership roles are aligned to school priorities and staff are provided with opportunities to share their professional learning with other staff.
4. Consolidate Enhance the Performance Development Program to focus on student learning and achievement for all teachers, support staff and learners..

Based on the school's current performance, Salisbury East High School will be externally reviewed again in 2021.

Appendix One

Policy compliance

The External School Review process includes verification by the Principal that key DECD policies are adhered to and implemented.

The Principal of Salisbury East High 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 2016 was 86.6%.

Appendix Two

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 2016, the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 37% of Year 9 students demonstrated the expected achievement under the DECD SEA. This result represents a decline from the historic baseline average and between 2014 and 2016, there is a downward trend from 57% to 37%. The school is achieving lower than the results of similar students across the DECD system.

In 2016 NAPLAN Reading, 5% of students achieved in the top two bands.

For those students who achieved in the top two NAPLAN proficiency bands in reading, 23%, or 6 of 26 students from Year 3 remain in the upper bands at Year 9 in 2016, and 46%, or 6 of 13 students from Year 7 remain in the upper bands at Year 9 in 2016.

Numeracy

In 2016, the numeracy results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 37% of Year 9 students demonstrated the expected achievement under the DECD SEA. This result represents a decline from the historic baseline average, and between 2014 and 2016, there is a downward trend from 59% to 37%. The school is achieving lower than the results of similar students across the DECD system.

In 2016 NAPLAN Numeracy, 2.5% of students achieved in the top two bands.

For those students who achieved in the top two NAPLAN proficiency bands in numeracy, 20%, or 3 of 5 students from Year 3 remain in the upper bands at Year 9 in 2016, and 33%, or 3 of 9 students from Year 7 remain in the upper bands at Year 9 in 2016.

SACE

In terms of SACE completion in 2016, 67% of students in February and 94% in October, who had the potential to complete their SACE, did go on to successfully achieve their SACE. This result for October SACE completion represents an improvement from the historic baseline average.

In terms of successful completion of compulsory SACE Stage 1 and 2 subjects in 2016; 95% of students successfully completed their Stage 1 Personal Learning Plan, 91% of students successfully completed their Stage 1 Literacy units, 72% successfully completed their Stage 1 Numeracy units and 98% successfully completed their Stage 2 Research Project.

Ninety-six percent of grades achieved in the 2016 SACE Stage 2 were C- or higher. This result represents an improvement from the historic baseline average. Twenty-two percent of students completed SACE using VET, and there were 50 students enrolled in the Flexible Learning Options program in 2016.

In terms of the number of grades for attempted Stage 2 SACE subjects in 2016, 16.5% of students achieved an 'A' Grade, and 41.2% achieved a 'B' Grade. This result represents an improvement from the historic baseline averages for both the 'A' and 'B' Grade.

In terms of 2016 tertiary entrance, 76%, or 66 out of 87 potential students achieved an ATAR or TAFE SA selection score in. There were also 2 students who were successful at achieving a merit.