

# Department for Education

## External School Review

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

### Report for Brighton Secondary School

Conducted in February 2020



## 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 Kathryn Entwistle, Review Officer of the department's Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate and Lia Tedesco, 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
- Scan of Aboriginal Education Strategy implementation
- Discussions with:
  - Governing Council representatives
  - Leaders
  - Parent groups
  - Student groups
  - Teachers

## School context

Brighton Secondary School caters for young people from year 8 to year 12. It is situated 13kms from the Adelaide CBD. The enrolment in 2020 is 1682 students. Enrolment at the time of the previous review was 1518. The local partnership is Holdfast.

The school has an ICSEA score of 1056 and is classified as Category 6 on the Department for Education Index of Educational Disadvantage.

The school population includes 2% Aboriginal students, 3% students with disabilities, 13% students with English as an additional language or dialect (EALD) background, 2% children/young people in care and 18% of families eligible for School Card assistance.

The school leadership team consists of a principal in their first year of tenure, a newly appointed deputy principal, four assistant principals, a Band 5 head of music, two Band 2 and 11 Band 1 leaders. The school has also historically released 7 teachers for one line to manage ThinkBright, Home Economics and Languages, as well as years 8 to 11.

There are 106 FTE teachers including 8 in the early years of their career and 10 Step 9 teachers.

## The previous ESR directions were:

- Direction 1** Create expectations and opportunities for all students to be more responsible for and engaged in their learning, so that staff and students are accountable for improved outcomes.
- Direction 2** Embed professional learning that delivers consistent pedagogical and assessment practices across the school that challenge all students to achieve their potential.
- Direction 3** Raise the expectations for all leaders and teachers to use data accountably to inform their work, and to use DayMap to store and share their professional documentation to communicate with colleagues, students and parents.

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

The panel sourced evidence that some of the previous ESR directions have been progressed through professional learning. The implementation of formative assessment to seek and respond to student feedback has seen some students provided opportunities to offer 'in-the-moment' feedback to teachers regarding their progress and understanding. Some teachers also report that they conduct pre-tests and surveys to establish students' prior knowledge.

In some learning areas, the concept of learner dispositions has been a focus of faculty conversations. Some students discuss the concept of a positive mindset supporting them when faced with difficult or challenging aspects in their learning.

Given the previous directions 1 and 2 identify consistent pedagogical implementation and learner engagement and challenge, the panel evaluated that more work needs to be undertaken to fully address these areas. Line of Inquiry 2 of this report discusses these concepts in more detail.

Strong evidence was observed that staff use the DayMap learner management system to store student data and information and to make task or assignment details known to students. Many teachers discussed the use of this platform in establishing a greater understanding of their students and some

staff add strategies they have used to support students. The previous direction includes a focus on the use of data to inform teachers' work. This will be discussed in more detail in Line of Inquiry 3 of this report.

## Lines of inquiry

### EFFECTIVE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

#### *How effectively does the school use improvement planning processes to raise student achievement?*

In semester 2 of 2019, the principal undertook a consultative process to review and redevelop a new Site Improvement Plan (SIP). The intention behind this undertaking was to sharpen the focus, respond to current data and establish greater collective clarity and commitment.

The 2020 SIP makes evident the priority to maximise *all* students' potential, focusing on writing across the curriculum and developing broader student connectedness with the school. In the early stages of 2020, all faculties are reviewing draft targets and actions, and providing feedback through their leader to generate the final document. Collective and consultative processes see almost every staff member with whom the panel spoke fully cognisant with school direction and priorities, and committed to their role in responding to the actions.

The place of faculty leaders in progressing school improvement is critical to effective implementation of actions and challenges of practice. Whilst in the early stages, a model of capacity building has been initiated to scaffold leaders to conduct consistent and structured faculty meetings. Observation of these forums during the review saw many teaching staff discussing and debating aspects of the draft SIP. Faculty leaders all report that they would welcome the continuation of this capacity building model.

Performance and development processes are reportedly aligned with school improvement and teachers' goals are informed by school priorities. The panel acknowledges this whilst identifying an opportunity to further strengthen this system. Many teachers reported that once performance goals have been established, there has been limited opportunities for monitoring or seeking feedback on performance and that strategies to achieve performance and development targets are at their discretion. Greater partnership between 'line leaders' and teachers, and a more strategy-based approach to developing performance, will be key in achieving consistent implementation of agreed practice.

Similarly, teachers report that faculty meetings operate with quite different foci and professional learning structures. Teacher learning communities consequently achieve varied impact. Continuing to scaffold leaders to convene and lead forums designed to build the capacity and capabilities of all is a critical consideration when progressing agreed actions.

**Direction 1**      **Effectively implement the school's challenges of practice and agreed actions through the establishment of coherent, scaffolded systems that develop the capacity of both teachers and leaders to respond to improvement imperatives.**

## EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND STUDENT LEARNING

### *How effectively are teachers using evidence-based pedagogical practices that engage and challenge all learners?*

Evidence of pedagogy that is designed to elicit student thinking and develop greater engagement with learning was evident in some classes visited and through conversations with staff and students. Opportunities for students to engage with formative assessment strategies and to respond to high yield questioning techniques were apparent in some learning areas. Feedback to students reportedly provides learners with useful direction and support. Most students indicated that they need to take the initiative to approach the teacher in order to access feedback.

Students, teachers and parents uniformly report that teaching is quite varied across the school and as such opportunities for students to maximise their potential is dependent upon which teaching approach is afforded them. The panel notes that, in line with the SIP goal 1, the identification and consistent implementation of high impact teaching strategies is a priority to which faculties are already working. Discussions regarding which strategies will be identified are clearly evidence-based. This undertaking will be significant in ensuring all students access a contemporary delivery of curriculum and effectively engage with their learning.

The panel identified an opportunity to further develop teaching practice through a more intentional approach. Whilst teaching across the school varies, a reliance on text book directed teaching, assignments and product driven approaches is apparent. This sees students embarking on assignments with little preparation or development of the skills and understandings required. Reference to the Australian Curriculum standards and learning outcomes and their place in teaching was limited. The school's approach to FLIP learning is practised with varying levels of impact with some students reporting that the scaffolded teaching aspect is not apparent. Some teachers did report that they strategically work with students to ensure skills and understanding are developed prior to application. This more structured approach provides a model from which to broaden intentional teaching across the school.

**Direction 2    Ensure students' skills and understandings are effectively developed by deepening teachers' understanding and implementation of the Australian Curriculum standards and student learning outcomes, when planning intentional teaching.**

## EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND STUDENT LEARNING

### *To what extent is student data and evidence used to inform and refine teaching at an individual, group or class level?*

Recent analysis of student wellbeing data has informed goal 3 of the SIP and the concept of students' connectedness with the school is valued by all staff. Many staff discussed wellbeing data as valuable in allowing them to develop greater understanding of their students and to forge effective relationships.

In 2020, SACE data has been collated and analysed by leaders. Many staff report that this is a new use of the data and appreciate the implications it has for reflective practice, internal moderation and planning. The panel acknowledges the work leaders are undertaking to raise the profile of data informed decision making and planning across the school.

In response to previous ESR directions, DayMap learner management system is used by teachers. NAPLAN data is available through the platform and students' achievement sees those either exceeding or below Standard of Educational Achievement (SEA) flagged accordingly. Most teachers reported that they use this data to determine 'where a student is at' in their learning, and to confirm their existing judgements. A few teachers discussed using the data to form groups in class or identify potential student leaders. Some staff report their faculty has accessed PAT and NAPLAN data, however reports of analysis and planning in response to the data were not evident. Teachers presented quite varied perceptions regarding the place of data in their work, and the need to continue to raise the profile of data and its value in planning across all faculties is evident.

Some teachers discussed the importance of differentiation. Staff explained their intent to meet learners' needs. Accommodations they initiate include varying due dates and providing options regarding the presentation of work or students' choice of topics. The provision of 'extra work', external intervention or acceleration of students, was also commonly reported. The panel heard limited reports regarding the analytical and intentional use of data to support differentiated planning and curriculum design to meet students' needs.

**Direction 3    More effectively meet the needs of each learner by ensuring all teachers and leaders develop an understanding of the importance of evidence informed planning and their capacity to use data analytically and responsively.**

## Outcomes of the External School Review 2020

At Brighton Secondary School, the new leaders are working deliberately and respectfully to bring about positive change in both practice and culture. A highly consultative and evidence-based approach to improvement planning has seen widespread take up and collective responsibility generated. Systems to identify priorities have been identified using reliable and data informed systems. Staff understand the purpose of the school's direction and appreciate the opportunity it has in maximising students' learning and wellbeing.

A survey of staff and analysis of student wellbeing data has informed 3 areas for cultural reform: communication, equity and connectedness, with the third forming goal 3 in the Improvement Plan. The panel commends the leaders' intent to review and address systems or interactions historically practised and to seek collective feedback in doing so. The concept of effective communication is paramount in continuing to lead school improvement and will support the school in responding to the 3 directions in this report.

The panel is confident that the direction Brighton Secondary School is taking, driven by informed and intentional leadership, will position the school well to achieve excellence in teaching and learning into the future.

The principal will work with the education director to implement the following directions:

- Direction 1** Effectively implement the school's challenges of practice and agreed actions through the establishment of coherent, scaffolded systems that develop the capacity of both teachers and leaders to respond to improvement imperatives.
- Direction 2** Ensure students' skills and understandings are effectively developed by deepening teachers' understanding and implementation of the Australian Curriculum standards and student learning outcomes, when planning intentional teaching.
- Direction 3** More effectively meet the needs of each learner by ensuring all teachers and leaders develop an understanding of the importance of evidence informed planning and their capacity to use data analytically and responsively.

Based on the school's current performance, Brighton Secondary School will be externally reviewed again in 2022.



-----  
Andrew Wells  
A/DIRECTOR  
REVIEW, IMPROVEMENT AND  
ACCOUNTABILITY



-----  
Anne Millard  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
PARTNERSHIPS, SCHOOLS AND  
PRESCHOOLS

-----  
Tony Lunniss  
PRINCIPAL  
BRIGHTON SECONDARY SCHOOL

-----  
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).

### Reading

In 2019, the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 83% of year 9 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. This result represents an improvement from the historic baseline average.

Between 2017 and 2019, the trend for year 9 has been upwards, from 73% to 83%.

For 2019, year 9 NAPLAN reading, the school is achieving higher than the results of similar students across government schools.

Between 2013 and 2019, the school has consistently achieved higher in year 9 NAPLAN reading, relative to the results of similar groups of students across government schools.

In 2019, 23% of year 9 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN reading bands. This result represents little or no change from the historic baseline average.

For those students in 2019 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in reading, 37%, or 44 out of 120 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 9.

### Numeracy

In 2019, the numeracy results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 86% of year 9 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. This result represents an improvement from the historic baseline average.

Between 2017 and 2019, the trend for year 9 has been upwards, from 78% to 86%.

For 2019, year 9 NAPLAN numeracy, the school is achieving higher than the results of similar groups of students across government schools.

Between 2013 and 2019, the school has consistently achieved higher in year 9 NAPLAN numeracy relative to the results of similar groups of students across government schools.

In 2019, 27% of year 9 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN numeracy bands. For year 9, this result represents an improvement from the historic baseline average.

Between 2017 and 2019, the trend for year 9 has been upwards, from 15% to 27%.

For those students in 2019 who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in numeracy, 55%, or 46 out of 83 students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 9.

### SACE

In terms of SACE completion in 2019, 80% of students enrolled in February and 98% of those enrolled in October, who had the potential to complete their SACE did go on to successfully achieve SACE. This result for October SACE completion represents little or no change from the historic baseline average.

For compulsory SACE Stage 1 and 2 subjects in 2019, 94% of students successfully completed their Stage 1 Personal Learning Plan, 95% of students successfully completed their Stage 1 literacy units, 82% successfully completed their Stage 1 numeracy units and 99% successfully completed their Stage 2 Research Project.



For attempted Stage 2 SACE subjects in 2019, 98% of grades achieved were at 'C-' level or higher, 26% of grades were at an 'A' level and 50% of grades were at a 'B' level. This result represents an improvement for the 'A' level and 'B' level grade, from the historic baseline averages.

Fourteen percent of students completed SACE using VET and there were 22 students enrolled in the Flexible Learning Options (FLO) program in 2019.

In terms of 2019 tertiary entrance, 72%, or 188 out of 261 potential students achieved an ATAR or TAFE SA selection score. There were also 10 students who were successful in achieving a merit.

In 2019, the school had a moderation adjustment of 1.9%.