

The Department for Education

External School Review

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

Report for Norwood Morialta High School

Conducted in August 2018



Review details

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.

The external school review framework underpinning the 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 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, they all have been considered and contributed to the development and directions of this report.

This review was conducted by Rob McLaren, Review Officer, Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate and Meredith Edwards and Richard Abells, Review Principals.

School context

Norwood Morialta High School is a site situated on 2 campuses 3 kilometres apart in Adelaide's north-eastern suburbs, and is part of the Morialta Partnership. The middle campus located at Rostrevor, caters for students in years 8 to 10, and the senior campus, located in Magill, caters of students in years 11 and 12. The enrolment is currently 1514, and was 1533 students in 2017. Enrolment trend has had a slight decrease of 46 students in the past 3 years.

The school is classified as Category 6 on the department's Index of Educational Disadvantage, with an ICSEA score of 1054.

The school population is quite diverse, with over 86 cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and includes 6 Aboriginal students, 3% of students with disabilities, 18% of families eligible for School Card assistance and 62% of students of non-English speaking background.

The school leadership team consists of a principal in their 3rd year of tenure at the school, 2 deputy principals overseeing the middle and senior school campuses respectively, 3 executive leaders who have a focus on organisational systems, student wellbeing and engagement, and international programs. There are 2 senior leaders who oversee STEM and literacy development; additionally, each of the 5 learning communities (Dunstan, Hartley, Morialta, Laslett and Campbell) is led by a Band 2 leader and 11 coordinators leading learning teams or focus areas. There are 108 teachers, including 10 in the early years of their career, 25 school services officers (SSOs) and 2 ground staff.

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 3 key areas from the External School Review framework:

Student Learning:	How well are students achieving over time?
Effective Teaching:	To what extent does the school cater for the varied needs of learners?
School Community Partnerships:	How authentic is the influence of students on their learning and throughout the school?

How well are students achieving over time?

The principal in her presentation to the panel described the uniqueness of Norwood Morialta High School. Located on a dual campus with a very diverse student cohort, it provides specialist programs in accelerated STEM, Italian immersion, rowing, and a year 10 extension (10EX) in the middle and senior schools. Students commented positively about these specialist programs, saying they provide engagement, challenge and stretch, while offering authentic learning and mentoring opportunities, and community partnerships. The school provides a breadth of extra-curricular activities, sports and leadership opportunities that value-add to curriculum and school life.

At the centre of the school's vision statement for learning is: students graduating as 'engaged global citizens, ready to meet the challenges of a changing world'. While its mission statement focuses on the development of powerful learners. System and internal school data show that it is a high-performing school, with proud

traditions and high parent and community expectations. Growth of student performance in the higher band has become a focus of improvement across the school.

Students talked positively about the school, describing teachers who push them to do well and willing to provide individual help with honest feedback verbally or through drafts.

Parents commented that they are kept well-informed of their child's learning progress through regular reports, conversations or emails with teachers. The DayMap learner management system provides immediate access for parents to grades and other school news, while students can access assignments and resources before posting work for the teacher to assess and provide feedback.

The school effectively uses data to monitor and evaluate student learning growth and wellbeing for learning. A data team led by a senior leader provides system and school-based datasets for tracking student progress against whole-school priorities, as well as responding to group requests for specific datasets to interrogate. Leaders and teachers have ready access to data to plan units of work for class groups, analyse trends in student groups, as well as reflect on progress at the end of each term. Other groups, including learning area, wellbeing and sub-school teams also have specific datasets provided to them to track and monitor progress. The panel was shown how students in the high proficiency bands of learning are being tracked using a plot graph that represents triangulated data from year 7 and 8 NAPLAN, PAT and school-grade data.

This evidence-based approach forms part of a high-band retention strategy in writing and numeracy. Teaching and leadership teams monitor and act on this information as part of the strategy to retain students in their proficiency levels over time. A range of other strategies exist to support these student groups, including explicit teaching of genre types, analysis of levelling in classes, literacy case management and review of curriculum in light of NAPLAN feedback.

A small number of students who have been disengaged from the offered curriculum are provided with alternative learning programs through the Flexible Learning Options (FLO) program. These students are case-managed to keep them engaged in learning, while staff are kept informed of their progress.

A culture of evidence-based improvement has developed, with reflection of practice by staff and students a key feature for growth.

An opportunity exists for staff to develop agreements on which high-impact pedagogies underpin and support the approaches to learning as articulated in the teaching and learning charter. This will assist in driving improvement for all students and particularly those achieving in the higher-bands.

Direction 1

Develop agreements in which high-impact pedagogies are to be used as part of the teaching and learning charter.

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

The school provides a wide variety of learning programs to support the varying needs of students. Special interest programs in accelerated STEM, Italian immersion and rowing embrace higher-order thinking skills and challenge-based learning. Staff and students described these programs as highly engaging, challenging and authentic in terms of learning and community partnerships. Other examples of successful programs, which have engaged and challenged students, include the Year 7/8 STEM Collaborative Inquiry Project in STEM learning, and a growing number of interdisciplinary units of work.

Teachers commented positively about what the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program (IBMYP) curriculum offers to learners. They described how structures and organisational support in the planning stages ensure opportunities for development of skills, including critical and creative thinking, and learning in a

global context. Students are also provided with multiple entry points to learning and opportunities to reflect on themselves as learners. The panel critiqued examples of successful unit plans and programs, and found they were designed to cater for a variety of student needs.

The school's teaching and learning charter describes 6 domains of focus for developing a leading and innovative learning community. The 'positive relationships' domain focuses teachers on students as learners and individuals valuing their diverse backgrounds, talents, prior experiences and knowledge. In domain 3, 'authentic teaching and learning' guides teachers to use innovative and contemporary pedagogy to provide personalised learning. In classroom observations and teacher/leader discussions, there was a variety of approaches on how teachers were attempting to meet the needs of students in their classrooms and enact the charter. These approaches are further enhanced with the Positive Education program, which supports student wellbeing for learning by developing resilience, persistence, risk-taking and seeking help when needed. The panel observed a breadth of support across the middle campus and, to a lesser degree, in the senior campus. However, in senior classes, exemplars of quality work, verbal feedback about ways to improve work and drafting was more prevalent. From the artefacts gathered, it was evident that more scaffolding in tasks was present in year 8, with decreasing amounts in year 10.

Teachers are provided with ample data on students. This equips them with the necessary information ensuring they are informed about student learning needs. The panel reviewed several examples of planned units of work and tasks differentiated for all students to be successful. However, some tasks were not differentiated for all students to achieve. Parents spoke strongly about the opportunities provided for both extension and support for learning at individual and group levels.

The panel observed that, in many cases, students' needs in learning were being met with some evidence of high-quality differentiated practice by teachers in the middle and senior campus. The IBMYP and SACE structures, documents and processes provide ample scaffolding for teachers to plan and program learning and assessment that can be differentiated for the learner. Observations in classrooms and discussions with students and staff illustrated some inconsistency in the understanding of what effective differentiation of learning was, the language that teachers used to discuss and develop it, and the effectiveness in which teachers implemented this into classroom practice. Evidence sourced from self-study staff surveys showed 30% of staff believed they needed greater support in their ability to effectively differentiate the curriculum.

The school is well-positioned to further enhance the teaching and learning charter, and ensure all students' needs are being met more effectively, by developing agreements on what is effective differentiation of learning and how it supports the needs of all learners. These agreements, aligned to targeted professional learning, can support teachers in the development of effective strategies for programming, planning and classroom practice.

Direction 2

Develop whole-school agreements on what is effective differentiation of learning, and build teacher capacity and resources to enact it.

How authentic is the influence of students on their learning and throughout the school?

One of the school's key priorities for improvement is around 'strengthening a culture that supports students to be empowered, resilient and to flourish'. To achieve this priority, a number of strategies, including the establishment of new student committee groups, a house system that recognises connections with community, student leadership, academic and co-curricular activities, and developing a student charter with student voice, are providing authentic opportunities for students to have an influence in their school.

Through the learning program, co-curricular programs and established partnerships, the school provides many opportunities for students to engage in, and influence, their local and wider community. The IBMYP and a number of senior secondary courses also give opportunities for students to take greater control and responsibility for their learning. While the panel was able to observe some outstanding practices of students negotiating learning and assessment, and having a greater voice in constructing the learning, this was more evident in the specialist programs but less across the general curriculum.

To support this priority of improvement, the school should:

- continue to develop more opportunities for students to be involved in collaborative planning and decision-making about their learning, learning environment and school life
- continue to build the capacity and confidence of students and staff to be co-constructors of learning
- identify and further develop with students and staff the key skills and attributes needed (within the teaching and learning and student charters) for students to be successful co-planners of their learning
- further develop units of work that have opportunities for students and staff to co-construct the learning, and
- provide ongoing support and resources to share and develop good practice.

Direction 3

Staff and students collaboratively develop agreements of what are the key skills and attributes of a successful learner to support co-construction of learning.

What is the school doing particularly well and why is this effective?

During the review process, the panel verified the following effective practice that is contributing significantly to school improvement at Norwood Morialta High School.

The school's teaching and learning charter outlines agreements of the expectations of its teachers in developing a leading and innovative learning community. The document's 6 domains provide clarity and focus for teachers in the development of their practice. The focus on building positive relationships, maintaining high standards of teaching practice, authentic learning experiences, collaboration and reflective practice, feedback for learning, and creating a safe and supportive environment, provides a clear roadmap for teachers and their work, and supports many aspects of effective teaching. This, aligned with the extensive use of data to gauge how students are achieving over time, and the positive education program, is strengthening student resilience and growth.

Outcomes of the External School Review 2018

Norwood Morialta High School has demonstrated growth in student achievement at or above what would be reasonably expected of a school in a similar context. A culture of improvement characterised by high expectations for students is evident.

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

1. Develop agreements about which high-impact pedagogies support the approaches to learning articulated in the teaching and learning charter.
2. Develop whole-school agreements on what is effective differentiation of learning, and build teacher capacity and resources to enact it.
3. Staff and students collaboratively develop agreements of what are the key skills and attributes of a successful learner to support co-construction of learning.

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



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Appendix 1

Attendance policy compliance

Implementation of the [Education Department student attendance policy](#) was checked specifically against documented evidence. The school was found to be compliant with this policy.

The school attendance rate for 2017 was 92%.

Appendix 2

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 2017, the reading results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 79% of year 9 students demonstrated the expected achievement under the SEA. This result represents an improvement from the historic baseline average.

Between 2015 and 2017, the school has consistently achieved higher NAPLAN reading relative to the results of similar groups of students across government schools.

In 2017, 16% of year 9 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN reading bands.

For those students who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in reading, 43% of year 3 students remain in the upper bands at year 9, and 53% of year 7 students remain in the upper bands at year 9 in 2017.

Numeracy

In 2017, the numeracy results, as measured by NAPLAN, indicate that 84% of year 9 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA. This result represents an improvement from the historic baseline average.

Between 2015 and 2017, the school has consistently achieved higher in NAPLAN numeracy relative to the results of similar groups of students across government schools.

In 2017, 22% of year 9 students achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN numeracy bands.

For those students who achieved in the top 2 NAPLAN proficiency bands in numeracy, 54% of students from year 3 remain in the upper bands at year 9, and 56% of students from year 7 remain in the upper bands at year 9 in 2017.

SACE

In terms of SACE completion in 2017, 85% of students enrolled in February and 100% of those enrolled 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.

For compulsory SACE Stage 1 and 2 subjects in 2017, 94% of students successfully completed their Stage 1 Personal Learning Plan, 97% of students successfully completed their Stage 1 literacy units, 96% successfully completed their Stage 1 numeracy units and 100% successfully completed their Stage 2 Research Project.

Ninety nine percent of grades achieved in the 2017 SACE Stage 2 were C- or higher. This result represents an improvement from the historic baseline average. Four percent of students completed SACE using VET, and there were 27 students enrolled in the Flexible Learning Options program in 2017.

For attempted Stage 2 SACE subjects in 2017, 27% of students achieved an 'A' grade, and 49% achieved a 'B' grade. This result represents an improvement and an improvement from the historic baseline averages for the 'A' grade and 'B' grade respectively.

In terms of 2017 tertiary entrance, 19%, potential students achieved an ATAR greater than 90 and the majority of students achieving an ATAR or TAFE SA selection score. There were also 24 students who were successful at achieving a merit.