

Department for Education External School Review

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

Report for Northern Adelaide Senior College

Conducted in October 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 Christine Bell, Review Officer of the department's Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate and Sharon Goldman, 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 student representatives
 - Leaders
 - School Services Officers (SSOs)
 - Student case Managers
 - Student representatives
 - Teachers

School context

Northern Adelaide Senior College caters for adult re-entry students (ie, aged over 16) as well students aged over 15 years from local high school who have enrolled as Flexible Learning Option (FLO) students. The school is situated 32kms from the Adelaide CBD. The enrolment in 2021, as at the February census, is 320 mainstream and 146 FLO students. At the time of the previous review enrolment was 506 mainstream and 44 FLO students. The local partnership is Peachey.

The school has a 2020 ICSEA score of 924 and is classified as Category 1 on the Department for Education Index of Educational Disadvantage.

The school population includes 19% Aboriginal students, 11% students with disabilities, 21% students with English as an additional language or dialect (EALD) background, less than 6 students in care and 82% of students eligible for School Card assistance. Thirty-seven percent of students are FLO enrolled and of these 36% are shared with other schools.

The school leadership team consists of a Principal in their 4th year of tenure, and 3 Assistant Principals:

- SACE/VET/Teaching & Learning,
- Student Services & Wellbeing,
- Timetable & Data for Improvement.

There are 37 teachers including 11 Step 9 teachers.

The previous ESR or OTE directions were:

- Direction 1** Further individualise student learning and raise literacy levels through targeted teaching that is informed by analysis of achievement data, and by building teachers' capacity to use this data strategically.
- Direction 2** Strengthen student's independence and deepen ownership and confidence within learning through the provision of intentions, feedback and criteria that allow students to better understand their learning and monitor progress.
- Direction 3** Increase the impact of performance and development systems on building teacher and leader capacity, through a coherently led, planned, and conducted PD model that makes responsibilities to achieve agreed outcomes clear.
- Direction 4** Broaden a culture of unity through a collective review of processes used to establish decisions and expectations and ensure consistent articulation and implementation of these across the college.

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

Direction 1: There is a consistent focus on data analysis to inform practice and a priority to provide area of study leaders with skills to support their teams. The Assistant Principal has a key role in upskilling all leaders. The school has trialled different ways to gather and use data sets using an online skills review tool to replace Progressive Achievement Testing (PAT) There has been some inconsistency in literacy leadership, but the school is now on track with an updated literacy plan. The literacy leader has been appointed for a further 5 years to provide continuity of leadership.

Direction 2: Formative assessment and the explicit use of learning intentions was a key focus area for professional development (PD) sessions. There has been a limited understanding of the use of formative assessment or providing teaching activities that were ‘teaching to the task.’ Recently, the school has trialled blending the formative and summative work, so teachers are continually gathering evidence of achievement to ‘catch them when they are here’ to improve students’ learning.

Direction 3: The school regularly reviews the professional development process and staff plans have a focus on the Australian professional standards for teachers (APST) and the use of data. Teachers identify where they need support to meet standards, and this information drives ongoing PD. The APST is visible on internal teacher PD certificates. To support new leaders a professional development plan (PDP) hierarchy chart has been developed. The school has a strong focus on performance management to address under performance using the APST as a basis for discussions and has worked closely with the department through this process.

Direction 4: In 2018 a divide between the community learning centre (CLC), which mainly caters for FLO students and mainstream Northern Adelaide Senior College (NASC), was identified. The school addressed this with a clear focus on a whole-school approach and all leadership roles include managing the CLC, within their area of responsibility. Clerical processes have been standardised across the college so that all systems are managed consistently.

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 students' learning?

The college has developed a collaborative statement of practice which describes expected quality teacher practice that has a deliberate connection to the school improvement plan (SIP). There is an opportunity to build on this work by collaboratively developing the 2022-2024 SIP, to enable clear involvement and ownership by all teachers, support staff and school leaders. Solid relationships exist between the school and the local education team (LET) and this will support the effective, collective development and implementation of the SIP, using best-practice strategies for achieving growth for all students. This will involve a cyclical approach to effective school improvement planning that highlights continuous monitoring, evaluation, reviewing and planning, and is actioned by all teachers, support staff and leaders.

Student free day opportunities are utilised for professional learning and focus on previous external review directives and SIP goals. It would benefit the college to embed this practice by providing planned learning sessions to collaboratively meet as a whole staff on a regular basis (twice per term as per SIP handbook requirements) to monitor the implementation of planned actions for improvement. This will have a direct impact on student learning, against the specified success criteria of the SIP, and will ensure all staff engage in the process by refining planned actions for improvement based on the outcomes of the monitoring.

There is a challenge for the college to sustain continual improvement outcomes for all students by formalising the collection of multiple data sets to track learning growth. Opportunities exist to ensure there is quality extensive data collected and analysed to determine the impact teachers are having in the classroom. Using the improvement planning cycle that is data and evidence informed, will guarantee the consistent and regular reviewing of teachers' challenge of practice, supporting teachers to understand how changes to their practice will improve student outcomes. Providing accountable professional development processes, that have a clear line of sight to the External School Review (ESR) directions, the SIP, professional learning, and classroom practice, will provide a framework for high impact teaching and learning.

Direction 1 Strengthen and document self-review processes by analysing quality data as a whole-school, to regularly evaluate the connections between and impact of the school improvement plan.

Effective teaching and student learning

How effectively are teachers analysing assessment and feedback data to inform differentiated curriculum planning and instruction?

All students expressed gratitude for the inclusiveness, value and care all staff demonstrate to support the potential and right for each student to learn. The college has invested in students' educational health by assigning individual case managers to every student who are responsible for developing strategies that support inclusion and improved learning outcomes.

Discussion with some teachers indicated there is some inconsistencies in their ability to access quality data to provide intentional teaching for their students. There is an opportunity for the college to collectively develop statements of expectations about what data is collected for what purpose, consistency in how this data is used, and to inform, refine and modify teacher planning and practice. Including sharing students' own data within the statement of expectation will allow the students to become powerful partners in their learning.

Some students spoken to by the panel could articulate what constitutes an A-E grade, however they were also clear about feedback from some teachers not always informing them as to their next steps for improvement. Most students spoken to said, 'assessment tasks were not always designed to allow students to demonstrate their skills and knowledge' (differentiation). Some students said they 'had opportunities to supply feedback to their teachers', but this was not consistent or regular.

All teachers and leaders spoken to by the panel indicated a readiness for further developing their craft of teaching and to stretch and inspire their students. This will occur as teachers consistently use assessment for learning strategies to prompt feedback from students that is used to inform and respond to the effectiveness of their pedagogical practices. Building staff capacity to differentiate the learning to meet students' needs, prior knowledge, skills, and interest, will build increased engagement and connectedness.

Allocating quality professional learning time for teachers to work in teams and reflect with peers on their practice to build teacher understanding of how high impact pedagogies will inform differentiated teaching is critical in engaging all students in challenging and meaningful learning.

Direction 2 Deepen and embed the use of quality data for intentional, differentiated teaching, assessment, and feedback processes, to further develop student agency.

Outcomes of the External School Review 2021

Northern Adelaide Senior College provides a valuable educational environment for the Northern Adelaide local community. They are proactive with their approach to enhancing students' educational outcomes and schooling experiences. The college is to be commended for their ability to promote respectful, productive relationships between all staff and students and this was evidenced through student conversations with the external review panel.

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

- Direction 1 Strengthen and document self-review processes by analysing quality data as a whole-school, to regularly evaluate the connections between and impact of the school improvement plan.**
- Direction 2 Deepen and embed the use of quality data for intentional, differentiated teaching, assessment, and feedback processes, to further develop student agency.**

Based on the school's current performance, Northern Adelaide Senior College will be externally reviewed again in 2024.



Kerry Dollman
Director
Review, Improvement and Accountability



Anne Millard
Executive Director
Partnerships, Schools and Preschools

Anne Sim
Principal
Northern Adelaide Senior College

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).

SACE

In terms of SACE completion in 2020 36% of students enrolled in February and 97% 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. Between 2018 and 2020 the trend has been upwards from 85% in 2018 to 97% in 2020.

For compulsory SACE Stage 1 and 2 subjects in 2020 100% of students successfully completed their Stage 1 Personal Learning Plan, 91% of students successfully completed their Stage 1 literacy units, 97% successfully completed their Stage 1 numeracy units and 100% successfully completed their Stage 2 Research Project.

For attempted Stage 2 SACE subjects in 2020 99% of grades achieved were at 'C-' level or higher, 26% of grades were at an 'A' level and 40% of grades were at a 'B' level. This result represents little or no change for the 'C-' level or higher grade, an improvement for the 'A' level grade and an improvement for the 'B' level grade from the historic baseline averages. Between 2018 and 2020 the trend for 'C-' or higher has been upwards from 90% in 2018 to 99% in 2020.

Sixty-five percent of students completed SACE using VET and there were 150 students enrolled in the Flexible Learning Options (FLO) program in 2020.

In terms of 2020 tertiary entrance 60% or 66 out of 109 potential students achieved an ATAR or TAFE SA selection score. There were also 17 students who were successful in achieving a merit.

In 2020 the school had a moderation adjustment of -1 for 6.8% of students.