



ACT
Government
Education

JERVIS BAY SCHOOL

Review Report 2017

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Introduction: Overview of the External School Review process

As part of the Australian Capital Territory's school improvement approach, public schools and colleges in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) are required to participate in an External School Review every five years. This document captures the findings of the External Review Panel during this cycle of school review.

In broad terms, the panel sought to determine, through evaluation against the National School Improvement Tool (NSIT), the extent to which the school is meeting its agreements, achieving its priorities, and addressing its challenges in the context of a continuously improving educational environment.

The External School Review was conducted over two days and involved a wide variety of data gathering approaches including desktop review, observations, interviews and documentation. This approach provided evidence for the panel to consider against the nine inter-related domains in the NSIT to inform the affirmations, commendations and recommendations for this school improvement cycle.

Section A: School context

Jervis Bay School is a small preschool to year 6 community school situated in the heart of Booderee National Park and on the outskirts of the HMAS Creswell Naval College grounds. Although on the New South Wales coastline, the school is located in Jervis Bay Territory and is therefore part of the Australian Capital Territory and the ACT Education Directorate. The school provides a service to the Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community, Jervis Bay Village, HMAS Creswell and a range of NSW areas. The school offers a Koori three-year-old preschool program, a four-year-old preschool program and classes from kindergarten to year 6. The programs are informed by the Early Years Learning Framework and the Australian Curriculum. The school has a strong connection to the local Aboriginal community, with the highest Aboriginal enrolment of any ACT school. Students learn about the land, country and culture through the local environment and a range of partnerships including the Booderee Junior Rangers Program.

The school has an Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage scale score of 742 (2016), well below the national average. Over the four years of the school's strategic plan, the enrolments have ranged from 63 in 2013 to 75 in 2015. The enrolment figures have remained constant or have increased slightly over the four-year period. Student attendance is high, around the 90 percent mark for students from kindergarten to year 6. Good attendance is recognised and celebrated at assemblies and through the newsletter, and any patterns of non-attendance are followed up by the principal.

Evidence cited

- School Summative Report 2017
- My School website
- student attendance data.

Section B: School performance

Jervis Bay School reviews school and individual student performance using:

- National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)
- Performance Indicators in Primary Schools (PIPS)
- stakeholder perception data (school satisfaction survey).

National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)

Over the life of the plan, the school has achieved the NAPLAN targets, considering the confidence intervals, set by the ACT Education Directorate in all areas except year 5 numeracy in 2016. Mean scores have been below the national and ACT means for each domain. The school's notable achievement, however, has been in comparison to like schools, where it has consistently achieved well above the mean scores in all domains. Over the four years of the plan, the average performance of female students has been higher than that of male students.

Growth data between years 3 and 5 was only available for 2017. For reading, writing and numeracy, 50 percent of students have made equal to or greater than expected growth. In grammar and punctuation, only 17 percent made equal to or greater than expected growth, but in spelling 67 percent of students made equal to or greater than expected growth.

Performance Indicators in Primary Schools (PIPS)

PIPS data shows that kindergarten students at Jervis Bay School start and end below the ACT mean scores every year, with the exception of 2014 when the students achieved higher than the end point ACT mean score for reading (124 for the ACT, and 149 for the school). The growth between start and end mean scores for students at the school has been significantly higher in reading than in mathematics.

The school tracks PIPS data in relation to growth in literacy and numeracy in years 3 and 5 NAPLAN, and have noted some significant gains over the past two and a half years. These gains have been attributed to the school's responsive approach to using data to inform intervention where appropriate, an emphasis on building teacher capacity and the delivery of quality pedagogy.

ACT minimum achievement standards

Since 2015, the school has been using the Directorate's minimum achievement standards for reading to determine how well the kindergarten to year 6 students are performing by the end of the year. There has been an increase in the percentage of students at or above the year level minimum achievement standards for kindergarten, and years 2, 4, 5 and 6.

Stakeholder perception data

The student satisfaction survey is completed by a small number (between 12 and 15) of year 5 and year 6 students. Although it is a small number, it is the entire cohort. In the past two years, the questions have been read to the students to clarify what the question is asking and to give students opportunities to clarify their thinking. In 2016, many of the item

responses were very high and well above that of the ACT. The notable exceptions are around the school being well maintained, students talking to teachers about their concerns and the access students have to equipment such as computers.

In regard to the parent perception data, parent responses were above ACT mean percentages in all items, except in 2016 in their perception of 'how student behaviour was managed'. The school attributes these high positive responses to the strong community involvement and established home and school partnerships it has maintained over the past few years. The data set is small as there are only approximately 30 families, but the school has worked to increase the numbers of parents who respond to the survey by entering data for any families who do not have internet access.

Staff satisfaction data is a small data set and subject to significant variations as one or two responses can skew results. The data is mostly below the ACT's in most items, except the item of 'the school is looking for ways to improve' in which 100 percent of staff agreed in 2016. 2017 data was very positive. The responses were notably lower in regard to 'student safety' and the 'management of student behaviour', 'school taking staff opinions seriously' and 'student learning needs being met'. Student safety and behaviour has since been discussed in professional learning teams, and teachers indicated that they feel all students are safe and that staff and students are well supported and there are appropriate safety measures in place.

Attendance data

Student attendance on average was 90 percent in 2016. In context with 'like schools' this attendance rate is significantly higher than normal.

Evidence cited

- School Summative Report 2017
- NAPLAN data 2013–17
- My School website
- PIPS data 2013–16
- ACT Education Directorate's Minimum Achievement Standards for reading 2013–16
- School Satisfaction Data 2013–16.

Section C: School improvement planning and implementation

Priority areas

The Jervis Bay School Strategic Plan has three priorities that have remained constant throughout the life of the plan:

- improve student learning outcomes
- improve family and community connections
- provide a preschool education that meets the National Quality Standard.

Each priority had a number of key improvement strategies, which were the focus in some annual action plans and not others. The corresponding targets have also changed over time.

Since the arrival of the new principal in 2015, the focus has been on improving the quality of teaching and learning, and building teacher knowledge and capabilities in identified priority areas to create and embed a culture that prioritises student achievement and learning.

Strategic Priority 1: Improve student learning outcomes

Key improvement strategies

In support of this priority, the school identified the following key improvement strategies:

- embed evidence-based teaching practices to ensure all students are engaged, challenged and learning successfully
- develop a culture amongst staff that focuses on intellectual rigor in literacy and numeracy
- actively build the capabilities of teachers
- develop a school-wide approach to the analysis and discussion of student data
- provide a learning environment that has students at the centre of everything we do
- develop a culture that promotes learning and high expectations for students.

Achievements

The following outcomes were achieved as a part of this strategic priority:

- a whole-school commitment to improvement in and a love for reading. As evidenced by the introduction of the home reading program, Reading Rockstars, Kindles for years 5 and 6 students, a data wall for reading, 100 percent participation in the ACT Chief Minister's Reading Challenge, consistent school-based assessment, and students demonstrating reading growth over the last three years
- a whole-school focus on improving teacher capacity and student engagement in writing, as evidenced by whole-school professional learning with Sheena Cameron and Louise Dempsey, engaging with the strategies from The Writing Book, the development of a draft scope and sequence, research being undertaken to identify a common assessment tool, and participation in the Directorate's Writing Fair 2017
- the development of a whole-school assessment and monitoring schedule

- the creation of a professional learning space where student achievement data is analysed and used to inform planning and teaching; use of the disciplined dialogue line of questioning to analyse data
- a clear professional learning agenda for teachers with the focus aligned to school priorities each year
- a successful working relationship with a range of stakeholders and external agencies to build teacher knowledge and capabilities; for example, Noah's Ark, school psychologist, Aboriginal medical services, Network Student Engagement Team and Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect)
- the establishment of a whole-school data plan in 2017, articulating the collection and analysis of diagnostic and standardised testing and wellbeing data
- the creation of sensory spaces in all classrooms and the introduction of a range of sensory tools to meet student need
- a focus on building teacher capacity as evidenced by teachers engaging with the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership Australian Professional Standards for Teachers, setting goals aligned to school priorities and personal areas of need, and a mentoring program to support point of need growth
- comprehensive student portfolios developed so that assessment and wellbeing data, and work samples are passed from one teacher to another at the end of each year
- the introduction and embedding of evidence-based pedagogy to improve student learning including explicit phonics in kindergarten, guided reading, an integrated curriculum approach, and literacy interventions.

Evidence cited

- Individual Learning Plans and Personalised Learning Plans
- a reading data wall
- handover portfolios
- end of semester reports
- teacher interviews
- classroom observations
- NAPLAN and PIPS data
- an assessment schedule
- a data plan
- a professional learning schedule.

Strategic Priority 2: Improve family and community connections

Key improvement strategies

In support of this priority, the school identified the following key improvement strategies:

- strengthen parental engagement in education
- strengthen the school's role in the Learning 4 Life Partnership
- build sustainable and relevant community partnerships.

Achievements

The following outcomes were achieved as a part of this strategic priority:

- a significant increase in the participation and engagement of parents in the development of Individual Learning Plans and Personalised Learning Plans from 44 percent in 2015 to 82 percent in 2017
- a significant increase in parent/carer attendance at whole-school events including National Aboriginal and Islander Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week, Book Week and whole-school performances from 2015 to 2017
- the introduction of learning journeys in 2017, with up to 90 percent of families attending
- the introduction of student work sample portfolios in 2017 as a means to communicate student success to parents/carers
- the gifting of an Aboriginal mural and sharing of Dreaming by a family in 2016
- the establishment of a Koori Garden Working Party in 2017
- the establishment of strong connections with community groups and stakeholders including the Australian Defence Force, Australian Federal Police, Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community Council, Booderee National Park and Anglicare; in 2017, a new community program, Gurumma Global, was established and supported
- the continuation, strengthening and ongoing success of the Booderee Junior Rangers Program and opportunities for cultural learning in authentic ways
- the hosting of school cross country in Wreck Bay to increase community engagement and participation in 2016 and 2017.

Evidence cited

- parent attendance records
- teacher, student and parent interviews
- partnership agreements.

Strategic Priority 3: Provide a preschool education that meets the National Quality Standard

Key improvement strategies

In support of this priority, the school identified the following key improvement strategies:

- promote children's health and safety within the school's programs
- ensure the physical environment is appropriate for the services to be provided
- ensure all staffing arrangements meet national standards.

Achievements

The following outcomes were achieved as a part of this strategic priority:

- all seven quality areas exceeded the National Quality Standard as rated in 2015
- the enhancement of existing outdoor learning spaces and the addition of new ones in 2017
- the training of all staff in the Munch and Move program in 2015, the review and implementation of the program in 2016 and the attendance by staff to the Munch and Move conference to maintain and embed the program in 2017
- the collaboration between preschool staff and the University of Wollongong to create a literacy-rich classroom environment, and to implement the Reconciliation Action Plan
- the training of staff in the Let's Count program in 2017
- the employment of an experienced early childhood educator with a focus on delivering quality education in 2017; she has enjoyed a smooth and successful transition.

Evidence cited

- teacher interviews
- classroom observations
- National Quality Standards assessment documentation
- professional learning
- professional learning schedule.

Reflections

The panel noted the strong purpose and direction given by the principal (who began in 2015), and supported by the leadership team, to ensure a student, staff and parent focus on building a positive culture conducive to student engagement and learning. The commitment to building the capacity of all staff to deliver and support quality teaching is to be acknowledged.

Interviews with staff, parents and carers and community members highlighted to the panel the exceptional connections and partnerships that the school has established, maintained and enriched over many years and certainly in the life of the Strategic Plan 2014–17. Formal partnerships have written agreements with clear expectations for all stakeholders and review timelines articulated. Potential new partnerships are evaluated on their ability to impact directly on student outcomes and wellbeing.

Teachers note of the high levels of collaboration they experience, and the collegial and executive support they received. The staff demonstrate excitement for their job and commitment to their students, the community and to school improvement. They are eager to build on their existing capabilities, to support the growth of their colleagues and to feel the reward for their efforts.

Section D: National tools self-evaluation results

National School Improvement Tool (NSIT)

DOMAIN 1: An explicit improvement agenda

- *The school has developed an agenda for improvement in partnership with parents and the community and school leaders can describe the improvements they wish to see in student behaviours and outcomes. This agenda is communicated in staff meetings, school newsletters, parent–teacher meetings and on the school website using a variety of formats to suit local needs.*
- *The leadership team has analysed school performance data over a number of years and is aware of trends in student achievement levels.*
- *The school leadership team is clearly committed to finding ways to improve on current student outcomes.*
- *There is evidence of a school-wide commitment to every student’s success, and staff of the school tell stories of significant student improvement.*
- *Targets for improvement are not specific (e.g. not accompanied by timelines).*

Comments and findings

- The Strategic Plan 2014–17 outlined three strategic priorities: improve student learning outcomes; improve family and community connections; and provide a preschool education that meets national standards. These priorities remained consistent throughout the planning period. As per ACT planning guidelines, targets were introduced in 2014 and new targets were issued each year; however, the original targets and strategies also changed over time. A focused agenda with targets and timelines is not evident. The planned strategies over the four years are generally having a positive effect on student outcomes. This is demonstrated in the board reports and annual action plans over the life of the plan.
- The strategic agenda for the school is communicated through the school board and staff meetings. Staff are able to talk about the improvement agenda in interviews and describe examples of individual student progress.
- Parents and students are not generally aware of the improvement program of the school, although agendas of meetings where student progress and achievement are discussed provide evidence of some communication of current priorities.

DOMAIN 2: Analysis and discussion of data

- *There is evidence that the principal and other school leaders view reliable and timely student data as essential to their effective leadership of the school. There is a documented school plan and timetable for the annual collection of data on student achievement and wellbeing.*
- *One or more members of staff have been assigned responsibility for implementing the annual plan, analysing the full range of school data, and summarising, displaying and communicating student outcome data for the school.*
- *Time is set aside (e.g. on student-free days and in staff meetings) for the discussion of data and the implications of data for school policies and classroom practices. These discussions occur at whole-school and team levels. The school can illustrate through case studies, meeting minutes and project plans how data have been used to identify priorities, take action and monitor progress.*

Comments and findings

- The school's data plan is comprehensive in listing diagnostic, standardised testing and wellbeing data. The data plan does not focus on moderated teacher judgements, particularly those linked to the Australian Curriculum achievement standards.
- In 2017, staff worked to put 'faces on the data' and this culminated in the creation of a data wall for reading that had a photo for each student. Regular meetings were held for teams to look at the data for the whole child and plan accordingly.
- In 2017, staff were introduced to the data analysis process call Disciplined Dialogue.
- Handover assessment documents provide continuity of student data from one year to the next.
- Reading analysis, completed by the school, demonstrated student growth from one term to the next.
- Professional learning team and other team meetings are held to discuss data on individual students and school progression in identified priorities.
- School board reports demonstrate that the school monitors whole-school data to determine priority actions for each year.

DOMAIN 3: A culture that promotes learning

- *The 'tone' of the school reflects a school-wide commitment to purposeful, successful learning.*
- *There is a strong focus on quality learning and on the creation of a culture in which all students are expected to learn successfully, in their own ways and at their own pace. Individual talents are valued. Class 'busy work' is kept to a minimum, and an attempt is made to ensure that all students are engaged in challenging, meaningful learning.*
- *Respectful and caring relationships are reflected in the ways in which staff, students and parents interact and in the language they use in both formal and informal settings.*
- *Parents and families are encouraged to take a genuine and close interest in the work of the school and are welcomed as partners in their children's learning. There are agreed guidelines on such matters as greeting visitors, taking messages, and responding to queries promptly and respectfully.*
- *Staff morale is generally high.*
- *The school effectively implements policies to deal with disruptive behaviour, bullying and harassment. The school has clear expectations for how students should behave and interact with one another, and in the main, relationships are caring and respectful. Some staff time is taken up dealing with behaviour problems.*

Comments and findings

- Survey data indicate that students and parents say that 'teachers expect me to do my best' (100% students, 96% parents) and 'teachers motivate me to learn' (100% students, 96% parents). This tone of high academic expectations is also reflected in the comments of parents and students during interviews.
- Senior students report that they feel prepared for the transition to high school.
- The school has a behaviour management plan. Survey data around 'I feel safe at school' (82% students, 92% parents) and 'behaviour is well managed' (73% students, 71% parents) indicate negative behaviours are managed effectively. Students mention that there are some bullying issues out of the classroom and further school-wide strategies would be beneficial. It is noted that the school has worked to reduce behavioural issues, particularly outside the classroom and it knows that further work is required.
- Staff, students and parents talk about the school's PRIDE values that encourage positive behaviours and high expectations.
- Parents and carers are increasingly becoming involved in Individual Learning Plan and Personalised Learning Plan goal formation and review. All parents or carers are invited to participate; participation has increased from 44 percent in 2015 to 82 percent in 2017.
- Parent or carer involvement in learning journeys has at times reached 90 percent.
- The school has established celebration assemblies to acknowledge merit for all students.
- Parents express a desire to have more individualised tools and strategies they could use at home to help their child improve following the learning journey, formal reporting processes or informal feedback.
- Survey data and staff interviews verify staff morale is high.

DOMAIN 4: Targeted use of school resources

- *The principal and other school leaders have given a very high priority to understanding and addressing the learning needs of all students in the school. This is reflected in the implementation of systematic strategies for identifying student needs and the development of creative school-wide solutions for addressing those needs.*
- *The school has developed processes (e.g. systematic testing and assessment) for identifying student learning needs, although there may not always be good school records of student achievement and progress.*
- *Programs to meet individual learning needs (e.g. programs for students with learning difficulties, students for whom English is a second language, Indigenous students) are prioritised, where possible, in the school budget.*
- *Physical spaces are used effectively to maximise student learning. Learning spaces are organised for whole group work, small group work and individual work.*
- *Technology is accessible to the majority of staff and students.*

Comments and findings

- There is a special needs referral process to respond to individual student needs and allocate resources appropriately. For example, the provision of therapy programs and other resources through school partnerships; and extra learning support assistants (LSAs) and school psychologist time through school funding. The principal has given high priority to providing extra school funds or developing partnerships to try and meet the complex needs students have at the school.
- The school implemented the Directorate Koori 3-year-old preschool program to improve student literacy levels prior to entry to preschool. They work with Gudjugamiamia, the preschool and day care at Wreck Bay to meet early intervention needs.
- The school has added new play equipment and generally upgraded internal and external spaces to make them more engaging to meet the range of sensory and student learning needs.
- A professional learning team space was allocated in 2017 to explore student data and plan accordingly. The space has a wall to track students' progress in reading.
- LSA timetables demonstrate a flexible use of LSA time to meet students' needs. The school provision of LSAs and school psychologists in the school is in excess of standard resourcing.
- School plans and budget shows that resources are allocated to priority areas.
- Classrooms are presented as vibrant, welcoming and purposeful learning environments.
- The high quality of the external environment of the school provides a potential for further opportunities to offer alternative learning spaces for students.
- There are significant connectivity issues with technology and as a result staff have been limited in their use of technology however they have utilised opportunities within these limitations in their classrooms.

DOMAIN 5: An expert teaching team

- *There is evidence that the principal and other school leaders see the development of staff into an expert and coherent school-wide teaching team as central to improving outcomes for all students.*
- *The school has arrangements in place for mentoring. Teachers visit each other's classrooms and welcome opportunities to have principals and other school leaders observe and discuss their work with them.*
- *Attention is paid to strengths and weaknesses in the school-wide team, with strategies in place to recruit staff with particular expertise, to train staff to address particular needs, and to support staff who find it difficult to commit to the school's improvement agenda.*
- *The school provides opportunities for teachers to take on leadership roles outside the classroom.*
- *The school is implementing a formal process for conducting professional discussions with staff.*
- *The professional learning agenda is made explicit to staff at induction, and in staff handbooks.*

Comments and findings

- There is a schedule of professional learning activities over each year. The scheduled activities align with the key priorities of the school. A documented professional learning plan does not yet include the various levels of professional learning within the school for all staff, the resources to be used for the professional learning both internal and external, and the process by which professional learning will lead to improved and embedded classroom practice.
- An exchange program operated in past years, with several other ACT schools, to harness expertise in each school and build teacher capacity through authentic mentoring relationships.
- Minutes indicate that whole school staff meetings dedicate time to professional learning.
- The executive team has been trained in coaching and has used the technique to help embed practices in the school.
- Professional coaching of the principal and deputy principal helps support the leadership of the school.
- The principal has focused on employing staff to fill expertise gaps in the school or developing existing staff capacity. The school now has many of the skill sets needed to be a self-supportive expert teaching team.
- Teachers report that they feel supported by the daily visits to their classrooms from the principal, deputy principal and LSCs. They report that the interactions are positive and rewarding. At times, school leaders model teaching practices. Mentoring is being extended in the future with peers taking guided walks into each other's classrooms to provide external observations and learn best practice or alternative teaching strategies.
- As Jervis Bay is a small school, every teacher is expected to take leadership roles outside the classroom in many areas.

- There is a formal, annual teacher professional development process in place for each teacher.

DOMAIN 6: Systematic curriculum delivery

- *The school identifies curriculum, teaching and learning priorities and requirements.*
- *The school curriculum (including the time allocated to particular learning) balances requirements to address all learning areas, to give priority to English, mathematics and science.*
- *The school leadership team ensures that the enacted curriculum remains a focus for discussion among, and collaboration between, teachers and that the curriculum plan is the reference against which flexible delivery is designed, assessment tasks are developed and student learning is reported. Curriculum delivery is designed to meet the needs of the range of students within each year level as well as those with disabilities and other particular needs.*
- *School leaders talk about embedding fundamental cross-curricular skills such as literacy, numeracy and higher order thinking within all subjects, but there is little evidence that school-wide strategies are in place to drive a consistent approach. Literacy tends to be seen as the responsibility of English teachers and numeracy, the responsibility of mathematics teachers.*

Comments and findings

- There is a scope and sequence map for inquiry and a draft map for writing.
- The school does not yet have a documented whole of school curriculum delivery plan. Teachers do not display a high degree of fluency with the Australian Curriculum to inform more consistent classroom planning and assessment.
- Some teachers use the achievement standards as a basis for planning, teaching and assessing.
- An annual English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) moderation in writing and standardised testing informs the moderation of writing across the school.
- Preschool uses the Early Years Learning Framework.
- *The Writing Book* by Cameron and Dempsey is the framework and tool for curriculum delivery in writing.
- Individual Learning Plans and Personalised Learning Plans are negotiated through three-way conferences.
- Teacher timetables outline suitable time allocations for all curriculum areas of the Australian Curriculum.
- A curriculum planning day was conducted at the end of 2016 across the school.
- Fortnightly professional learning team meetings are used to discuss curriculum-related issues.

DOMAIN 7: Differentiated teaching and learning

- *School leaders explicitly encourage teachers to tailor their teaching to student needs and readiness. This includes the systematic use of assessment instruments (standardised assessment tasks and teacher developed assessment tools) to establish where individuals are in their learning and to identify skill gaps and misunderstandings. Teachers also are encouraged to respond to differences in cultural knowledge and experiences and to cater for individual differences by offering multiple means of representation, engagement and expression.*
- *Planning shows how the different needs of students are addressed. Students' workbooks also illustrate differentiated tasks and feedback.*
- *Reports to parents show progress over time and include suggestions for ways in which parents can support their children's learning.*

Comments and findings

- Teachers work in teams using a variety of data sources to identify starting points for student learning.
- Every child has an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) or Personalised Learning Plan (PLP). ILPs and PLPs are conferenced with parents and students at least every six months. Within this process, parents are informed about how they can assist in their child's progress.
- Reports and learning journeys provide parents with student progress and provides ways that parents can help.
- There is a home reading program to help parents assist with their child's reading skills.
- All students have targeted learning goals in reading, writing and mathematics. These goals were displayed in ILPs/PLPs or in the classroom.
- Differentiated punctuation and spelling goals are formed for years 3 to 6.
- Teachers use sub-groupings based on some assessment tasks and different activities including graduated worksheets as differentiation strategies.
- Staff attended professional learning on differentiation in 2016. In 2017, staff worked with Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) and Network Student Engagement Teams to identify individual and whole-class programs to meet student needs.
- Students requiring special support are assisted by learning support assistants in the classroom.
- Teachers follow psychologist's recommendations by making appropriate adjustments to the teaching program.
- An annual English as An Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) moderation determines EAL/D student progress across 12 months.
- There is an opportunity to use recent professional learning on differentiation using achievement standards to expand on differentiation practices in the school.

DOMAIN 8: Effective pedagogical practices

- *School leaders are committed to continuous improvement in teaching practices throughout the school and expect team leaders and teachers to identify ways of doing this.*
- *There is a particular focus on improved teaching methods in reading and writing and professional learning activities are focused on building teachers' understandings of highly effective teaching strategies in these areas.*
- *Clarity about what students are expected to learn and be able to do, high expectations of every student's learning, explicit teaching of skills and content, and individualised attention as required are key elements of the school's push for improved teaching and learning.*

Comments and findings

- In recent years, staff have received professional learning in reading, Count Me In Too, writing and early years learning. In 2017, staff are engaging with the Principals as Numeracy Leaders strategy.
- While there are expressions of the kinds of teaching required in various curriculum areas or in earlier versions of classroom observations, there is no explicit and clear position on the kinds of teaching leaders wish to see occurring across the school.
- The leadership in the school models pedagogical practices in the classroom.
- In the classrooms, teachers use explicit teaching to explain concepts.
- Learning intentions and Bump it Up walls were visible in most classrooms. Success criteria or rubrics as a means of providing student feedback are not as evident in classroom practice.
- The professional learning team meeting agenda covers specific pedagogical practices around the school improvement agenda such as writing.

DOMAIN 9: School-community partnerships

- *The school leadership team makes deliberate and strategic use of partnerships with families, local businesses and community organisations to access intellectual, physical and/or other resources not available within the school for the purposes of improving student outcomes. There is a range of currently operating partnerships, each carefully planned and designed to enhance student outcomes (for example, to broaden student knowledge, build new skills, develop more positive attitudes, increase engagement levels, create applied learning opportunities for students, or facilitate successful transitions to work or further education or training).*
- *Each partnership has been established in response to an identified need. Considerable effort has been put into understanding students' needs, identifying appropriate partners to address those needs, planning the details of partnership programs and clarifying partner roles and responsibilities.*
- *Careful consideration has been given to the benefits of the partnership to each participating partner. Explicit processes are in place to ensure ongoing and effective communication – sometimes across networks of partners – and there are documented plans for monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of each partnership.*
- *The school's partnerships are being successfully implemented and appear to be adequately resourced and sustainable. There is clear evidence that partnerships are having their intended impact.*

Comments and findings

- The University of Wollongong works with the preschool as part of its Reconciliation Action Plan. The university uses the school (and other schools) for research. In return, teachers are exposed to research-based practices. There is a memorandum of understanding with a review of student outcomes in a set timeline.
- The local Aboriginal medical service supports a Koori kids program to connect with culture and support students' sense of identity.
- The Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community Council works with the school in National Aboriginal and Islander Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) celebrations, assemblies, the Booderee Junior Rangers and gifting of Dreaming and murals.
- Aboriginal mentoring and counselling, art therapy and play therapy were the result of a partnership with Anglicare. This long-term partnership recently collapsed due to funding issues but the school has temporarily maintained an art therapist while it negotiates another partnership with a third party.
- A health program was developed through a partnership with Noah's Ark, NSW Health and Network Student Engagement Team Allied Health.
- Cultural exchange for years 5 and 6 students is through a partnership with Mutitjulu community in the Northern Territory and Uluru National Park.

National Safe Schools Framework: School Audit Tool

The staff first assessed themselves against the National Safe Schools Framework School Audit Tool in 2016 and this was reviewed in 2017. They were not able to find any significant areas to focus on, however, have determined that the areas that they rated as 'mostly true' as opposed to 'definitely true' would be analysed to help identify priorities within their next strategic plan.

Areas where some 'mostly true' ratings were found were:

- leadership commitment to a safe school
- policies and procedures
- professional learning
- positive behaviour management
- engagement skill development and safe school curriculum
- a focus on student wellbeing and student ownership.

Section E: Affirmations, commendations and recommendations

Affirmations

The External Review Panel offers the following affirmations for Jervis Bay School.

- The school is acknowledged for its efforts over the life of the plan in improving reading. Of particular mention is the introduction of the home reading program.
- The school is to be acknowledged for recently making writing a whole-school focus. Teacher professional learning, moderation of writing samples, the development of a draft scope and sequence, and the research around an appropriate assessment tool are all contributing to this focus.
- Over the life of the plan teachers have developed skills to use data to identify individual starting points for improvement and to monitor progress over time. This has enabled staff to put 'faces on the data' and provide a focus on the whole child.
- The leadership has placed a priority on building an expert teacher team, to provide quality teaching and learning and maintain a culture where student learning is at the centre of all their work.
- The school is acknowledged for establishing professional learning teams that are focusing on student data, teaching strategies and whole-school priorities.

Commendations

Jervis Bay School is commended for the following.

- The school has built strong partnerships with parents, families, local businesses and community organisations (including allied health, family support, counselling, and rehabilitation services) to improve opportunities and outcomes for students. It identifies potential partnerships on the basis of their capacity to contribute to improved student achievement and/or wellbeing.
- The staff at the school demonstrate an understanding of the importance of positive and caring relationships to successful learning, and work to build mutually respectful relationships across the school community.
- The school places a high priority on student wellbeing and has processes in place to provide both academic and non-academic support to address individual needs.
- The school works to create an attractive and stimulating physical environment that supports and encourages learning.
- Students are engaged, challenged, feel safe to take risks and are supported to learn.
- All staff and students have an obvious sense of belonging and all parents are welcomed.
- The preschool received a rating of exceeding the National Quality Standard in all areas.

Recommendations

The External Review Panel recommends Jervis Bay School pays attention to the following opportunities for school improvement during the next planning cycle.

- Develop a five-year strategic agenda, in the context of the school vision, expressed in terms of sharp and narrow improvements sought in student performance, aligned with national and/or system wide improvement priorities and inclusive of clear targets with accompanying timelines, which are rigorously actioned.
- Refine the school's data plan to include teacher judgements on achievement standards and how these moderated judgements will be used for individualised planning, teaching and assessment as well as school-wide planning.
- Develop a professional learning plan and continue to encourage the development of a culture of continuous professional improvement, which includes classroom-based learning, mentoring and coaching.
- Develop an explicit, agreed statement on the kinds of teaching that are to be used across the school.
- Develop a coherent, sequenced plan for curriculum delivery that ensures consistent teaching and learning expectations and clear reference for monitoring learning across the year levels.

Section F: Record of school review process

The following people were members of the External Review Panel for Jervis Bay School conducted on 6–7 September 2017.

Name: Ron Bamford External Review Panel – Chair

Name: Liz Bobos External Review Panel – Principal Member
Latham Primary School

I, Ron Bamford, as External Review Panel Chair endorse that this is a true and accurate record of the findings from the External School Review process.

Signature: 

Date: 17/10/2017

I, Rachel Burke, as Principal of Jervis Bay School accept this Review Report on behalf of the school community.

Signature: 

Date: 17/10/2017