EXTERNAL VALIDATION REPORT 2013

for

MAWSON PRIMARY SCHOOL
Record of Validation Process

The following people were members of the external validation panel for Mawson Primary School conducted on 14 and 15 August 2013.

Name: Mandy Kalyvas  School: Hawker Primary School
Name: Rebecca Turner  School: Amaroo School
Name: Anne-Marie Marek  School: Holy Family Primary School, Gowrie ACT

As chair of the panel, I endorse that this is a true and accurate record of the findings from the external validation process.

Name: Mandy Kalyvas
Signature: M.Kalyvas  Date: 9/9/13

As principal of Mawson Primary School, I accept the Validation Report on behalf of the school community.

Name: Amanda Andrews
Signature: Amanda Andrews  Date: 10 September 2013

As co-director of Quality Learning Australia, external validators for the conduct of validation process in ACT public schools, I concur that the panel acted within the guidelines set by the ACT Education and Training Directorate.

Name: Jane Kovacs
Signature:  Date: 10/9/13
Section A: School context

Mawson Primary School is a small ACT government preschool to year 6 school, located in the suburb of Mawson. The school endeavours to equip all students with the knowledge and skills needed to achieve personal success, within a safe and caring environment. The school’s vision is to provide a learning environment where all students can achieve personal success and this is encapsulated in the school motto: Strive to Succeed. The school’s priority enrolment area includes the surrounding suburbs of Mawson, Swinger Hill, parts of O’Malley and Chifley, with Phillip zoned as a shared enrolment area between Mawson and Garran Primary schools in 2012.

The school population at Mawson Primary School is 219 with 46 students in the preschool. Enrolments are increasing slightly due to the introduction of the Preschool and the Mandarin Immersion Program (MIP).

Mawson Primary School is a diverse school community with an Index of Community Socio-Economic Advantage (ICSEA) value of 1110, with significant cultural diversity amongst the student population. In 2013, 31 percent of students were classified as speaking English as an additional language or dialect (EALD). There are 86 languages spoken by families in the Mawson Primary School community. The student population includes 1.8 percent Indigenous Australians and 2.3 percent of students with an identified disability. Inclusive practices are embedded into the culture of the school. Currently there are 22 staff members. The school leadership team comprises the principal, one deputy principal and one executive teacher.

The design and architecture of Mawson Primary School is that of a traditional school. It was opened in 1968. Classrooms are spacious with interactive whiteboards and wireless Internet throughout school.

The Mawson Primary School community values and celebrates the cultural diversity that families bring to the educational setting. There are strong home-school connections and the school encourages family members to participate in all school-based activities.

Learning a second language is a priority at Mawson Primary School. There are opportunities for students to participate in the unique bilingual Mandarin Immersion Program (MIP) for students in years 3-6, as well as K-6 Mandarin language classes. In 2012 the school introduced a one day per week intensive Mandarin language program in kindergarten. The privately operated Chinese/Australian Early Childhood Centre is located next to the primary school site.

In 2010 an Environmental Centre was built through Building Education Revolution funding. As a result, the school’s sustainable practices and environmental education have been strengthened.

In music, year 4/5 students have access to an Instrumental Music Recorder program and all year 3-6 classes participate in a guitar program once a week.

Section B: School performance

Mawson Primary School is committed to implementing a balanced literacy and numeracy program that includes the use of system and school data to identify priorities and actions over the duration of the plan.

A need for a data informed approach to learning was identified in the 2010 School Evaluation Matrix. Over the course of the plan staff have engaged in professional learning and developed systems to record and monitor student progress, particularly in literacy and numeracy.
From 2011 teachers have collected student data at the end of each term for reading and spelling using PM Benchmark and South Australian spelling test.

In Mathematics, Schedule for Early Number Assessment (SENA) testing was used in K-1 and Middle Years Mental Computation (MYMC).

In 2012 Progressive Achievement Test (PAT) Maths was introduced in response to an identified need for a consistent tool for monitoring the progress of Mathematics across the school.

All data is collated on GradeExpert.

Mawson Primary School’s National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) data for year 3, 2010, indicated a strong cohort and this was reflected in 2012 year 5 NAPLAN results. In 2010 year 3 reading, grammar and punctuation, writing and numeracy results were substantially above the ACT mean scores with spelling above the ACT mean. Year 5 results were statistically similar to the ACT average.

The year 3 reading and numeracy results in NAPLAN in 2011 remained above the ACT mean, with grammar and punctuation, writing and spelling within the acceptable range. The year 5 reading, writing, grammar and punctuation and numeracy results in NAPLAN in 2011 were within the average range of the ACT. Spelling results were slightly below the ACT average.

In 2012 the year 3 mean for reading and numeracy were above the ACT average. Grammar and punctuation and writing mean scores were close to the ACT mean. Spelling continued to be below the ACT average. The year 5 students performed substantially above the ACT mean in all areas.

Over the past 3 years all targets set by the Education and Training Directorate have been met with the exception of year 5 reading in 2010. The panel also recognises the school’s continued improvement in national testing which is evident on the My School website.

The 2012 Performance Indicators in Primary Schools (PIPS) results indicate that 87 percent of students achieved expected growth in reading. Twenty of the 23 students achieved expected progress or better in reading. Overall 87 percent of students achieved expected growth and this is an improvement of 26 percentage points on the 2011 results.

There has been a genuine attempt by the staff to engage the community in whole school events and student learning. The school sought feedback from the parent community on the validity of these events. This included school satisfaction data, student learning data and community and staff perception data.

**Evidence cited and its validation**

NAPLAN results 2010 – 2012

ACT ETD targets and school achievement towards the target

School Board Reports 2010-2012.
Section C: School improvement planning and implementation

PART 1: Improvement planning

Following Mawson Primary School Validation in 2009, the school has embarked on a journey of continual improvement. The School identified nine priority areas for the current school improvement cycle. The priority areas include:

Priority 1 – Build a school culture of high expectations, that shares quality teaching and inclusive practices within the learning community.

Priority 2 – Implement a balanced literacy and numeracy program across the school.

Priority 3 - Further strengthen bilingual education at Mawson through increased immersion opportunities.

Priority 4 – Effective communication between members of staff and executive staff.

Priority 5 - Foster a shared vision through the involvement of key stakeholders in school decision making.

Priority 6 - Promote a safe environment for students and staff that fosters resiliency and responsibility.

Priority 7 – High expectations that all students can achieve quality work, care for, and take pride in the school community.

Priority 8 - Strengthened home/school partnerships through participation in school organization and governance.

Priority 9 - To ensure Mawson Preschool provides high level services that contribute to each child’s learning and development.

These priority areas have been developed through Annual Operating Plans and reported against in the annual School Board reports. Efforts have been made to gather evidence and data to demonstrate improvement across these priority areas. Over the four year cycle, some data has influenced school direction within some priority areas resulting in identification of further work to be undertaken.

The panel noted the school has endeavoured to implement a diverse, large number of priorities and would benefit from the development of an overarching School Plan for the next four year cycle, with fewer priorities. This will enable the school to focus on identified areas of improvement in the annual operating plans.

Section C: School improvement planning and implementation

PART 2: Improvement actions

Priority 1 Build a school of high expectations that shares quality teaching and inclusive practices within the learning community.

The expected outcome for this priority area was to achieve all targets set by the Directorate in NAPLAN in years 3 and 5, and to decrease the percentage of students at or below the national minimum standard from 25 percent to 18 percent by 2013.
Mawson Primary School has endeavoured to build a school culture of high expectation that shares quality teaching and inclusive practices within the learning community. The Quality Teaching model and *Understanding by Design* were introduced to teaching staff in 2010. These have been used to improve teacher performance by enabling teachers to reflect upon their practice to improve programming, pedagogy and consistency of documentation and expectation.

A whole school term planning document was developed in 2012, incorporating the Australian Curriculum, Quality Teaching model elements and the *Understanding by Design* approach to programming, teaching and learning activities. Teachers continue to work in teams and meet regularly with a school leader, to discuss programming, consistency in assessment and how the Quality Teaching model elements were utilised that term.

A result of a student satisfaction survey identified the need to provide quality feedback to students. Rubrics are now used as one means to assess student performance and provide feedback to students and parents on student progress. An emphasis has been placed on teacher consistency of practice in improving quality of bookwork across the school with the aim of further understanding student progress.

Improved literacy skills for Indigenous Australian students was a school focus in 2011. Resources were purchased to enhance cultural connections and interests in reading for these students. This reading material, along with Personal Learning Plans, assists teachers to differentiate their literacy programs.

In 2012, the staff developed a Scope and Sequence for the teaching of the Australian Science Curriculum from kinder to year 6. The existing *Primary Connections* resource was mapped against the Australian Curriculum and continues to be used as the primary teaching resource for the teaching of Science at Mawson Primary School.

Student performance data is collected at the end of each term for reading and spelling using the *Performance Maintenance (PM) Benchmark* and the *South Australian Spelling Test*. *Schedule for Early Number Assessment (SENA)* testing is used in K-1 to gather performance data in Mathematics and in 2012 the *Progressive Achievement Test (PAT)* in Mathematics was introduced in years 3-6 in a response to an identified need for consistent tracking of student performance. All data is collated on *GradeExpert* data software. This allows staff to monitor progress, inform programming and indicates where intervention should occur and where resources should be allocated.

The panel commends Mawson Primary School on successfully meeting their targets for student achievement.

**Evidence cited and its validation**

- NAPLAN data 2009-2012
- Student survey data 2009-2012
- Staff survey data 2009-2012
- Mawson Primary Bookwork Guidelines
- Quality Teaching timetable, reflection sheets
- Woden cluster schools and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Agreement
- Programming proforma
Individual Learning Plan proforma.

**Priority 2 Implement a balanced literacy and numeracy program across the school.**

The expected outcome for this priority area was continued growth in student achievement in the areas of literacy and numeracy with particular focus on reading and numeracy. Targets included meeting Directorate set targets in NAPLAN and to reduce the percentage of students at or below the national standard from 25 percent in 2009 to 18 percent by 2013.

The drive to improve student achievement was founded on a strong focus on literacy and numeracy practices across the school and a commitment to a whole school approach.

Actions to achieve this priority included staff writing a literacy and numeracy goal as part of their Professional Pathways plan and the adoption of the GROWTH coaching model principles to support and grow staff capacity in these areas. These principles were also used to underpin professional conversations about teaching, planning and programming.

Additional staffing allocation to support literacy and numeracy programs impacted positively over the duration of the school improvement cycle. This provided additional expertise to further develop the whole school vision and teacher capacity, resulting in improved student learning outcomes in literacy and numeracy.

In addition, staff participated in a range of professional development to further support student learning including system supported programs such as *Middle Years Mental Computation* (MYMC) and *BEE Spelling* programs.

Programs and assessment tools, such as *Capacity Matrix* Spelling, *Go Maths*, *PAT Maths* and the *South Australian Spelling* test, were introduced to align whole school practices.

Other initiatives including, *Data* and *Reading Walls*, were introduced to focus staff attention on student learning and to engage and inform the school community about year level expectations of achievement in reading. This also assisted the school in its aim to ‘de-privatise’ teacher practice. The panel acknowledges the challenges faced by the school while improving the way teachers work in this area. The panel commends the school for persisting in its goal for improved student learning outcomes in literacy and numeracy. The panel supports the school’s recommendation to seek out further opportunities to ensure consistency of practice exist in the early years K – 2.

The panel commends the school for achieving the majority of directorate set targets 2010 – 2012 while recognising the challenges associated with the delivery of the language immersion program and the high percentage of staff turnover during this period.

**Evidence cited and its validation**

- NAPLAN data 2010 – 2012
- PM Reading Benchmark data 2010 - 2012
- Annual Operating Plans 2010, 2011 and 2012
- School Board Reports 2010, 2011 and 2012
- Examples of Professional Pathway goals
- *Data Wall* image.
Priority 3 Further strengthen bilingual education at Mawson through increased immersion opportunities.

Mawson Primary School indicated the outcome for this priority to be a 20 percent increase in both the percentage of the curriculum being delivered through the teaching of the Mandarin language and the level of bilingual proficiency from years 3 to 6.

The Mandarin and English language teachers have worked together to program the delivery of aspects of the Australian Curriculum during the Mandarin Immersion Program (MIP) days. Pathways for students were strengthened with the addition of a Chinese Language Assistant. This staff member was shared between Melrose High School, Canberra College and Mawson Primary School giving the three schools access to a native language speaker during the life of this plan.

In 2012, a one day immersion program in Mandarin commenced in Kindergarten. This has been extended to year 1 in 2013. Through conversations with the principal, the panel recognises the introduction of MIP in the early years as creating opportunities for children to engage with the Australian Curriculum in later primary in both Mandarin and English. The Mandarin language teachers have engaged in language-specific professional learning, school-based meetings and general professional learning opportunities. In 2013 three Mandarin teachers began trialling the draft Australian Chinese language curriculum. The school promotes language acquisition through engaging in a number of community events. The success of the program has been recognised, through two ACT Mandarin language competitions, as well as Mawson Primary School hosting a study tour of students and teachers from China.

There has been an increase in students enrolled in MIP since 2011 with 58% of students studying Mandarin within the MIP this year. The number of Chinese speaking Preschool students enrolled at Mawson Primary School has increased since 2011.

The complexities of staffing, recruitment and timetabling are being addressed through a flexible approach to program delivery with a combination of one and two day programs provided by part-time specialists and a classroom teacher who is a native speaker.

The panel recommends that staff explore alternative methods to measure the effectiveness of the MIP and commends the school for providing this unique program for its students.

Evidence cited and its validation

MIP enrolments
Report on Mandarin Program
Report on Mandarin Improvement from 2012-2013.

Priority 4 Effective communication between members of staff and executive staff.

The expected outcome for this priority was to improve communication amongst all staff and to improve communication between the executive staff and teachers as indicated in school satisfaction data to 65 percent.

At the beginning of the school year staff were asked to volunteer for committees and assist in school events, to encourage staff to work in teams. Weekly team meetings also provide opportunities for staff to work within teams. Staff contribute to the weekly staff meeting agenda and make contributions to school goal setting.
Strategies to improve communication between the full and part-time staff included staff being provided with an iPad, yearly and term diaries, calendar, a message board in the staffroom and emails.

A workload committee meets each term to discuss issues such as timing for the submission of programming documents and student reports. School leaders and classroom teachers are represented in the committee. Emerging leaders are encouraged to adopt leadership roles.

In 2009, 50 percent of staff agreed there was effective communication between executive and teachers. This has increased to 64 percent in 2012. Whilst the school satisfaction survey has not been completed for 2013, staff participated in a school-based communication survey. The results of this survey indicate that all staff perceive there to be effective communication between the executive and teachers.

**Evidence cited and its validation**

Teacher Satisfaction Survey results 2010-2013

School based communication survey.

**Priority 5 Foster a shared vision through the involvement of key stakeholders in school decision-making.**

The first intended target for this priority area was to increase staff satisfaction in ‘I have opportunities to participate in decision making’ by 5% per annum from 50% in 2009 to 75% in 2013. The second intended target was to increase student satisfaction in ‘I have the opportunity to participate in decision making at this school’ from 65% in 2009 to 74% by 2013.

Actions to address the staff target in this priority articulated within the validation report stemmed mainly from data collected about how the school vision had little operational impact and relevance. The school executive identified the need to further develop staff whole-school beliefs about student learning and consistent expectations about that learning.

To address this, staff revisited the school vision in 2011 to develop a shared understanding and acknowledgment of purpose. This has now become part of the induction process for new staff and part of the beginning of the year professional learning for staff.

School satisfaction data indicates that staff satisfaction in decision-making participation has improved each year, with the exception of 2012.

The panel noted that there was limited evidence of other actions taken in this priority in relation to the staff target.

Barriers articulated in the validation report did not identify the challenges associated with entrenched staff views and staff turnover.

The panel noted that the school may benefit from further exploring other opportunities that enable and empower staff.

The drive to improve decision-making participation for students included the reinvigoration of the Student Representative Council (SRC) and regular opportunities for students to set their own learning targets in class. This resulted in the school exceeding its student-focused target of 74 percent to 97 percent satisfaction in 2012.

The panel acknowledges that at the time of validation the ACT School Satisfaction Survey had not yet taken place.
Evidence cited and its validation

School Evaluation Matrix


Priority 6 Promote a safe environment for students and staff that fosters resiliency and responsibility.

The expected outcome of this priority included increased student satisfaction with feeling safe at school from 65 percent to 80 percent and to increase the perception that student management is effective from 67 percent to 80 percent by 2013. In addition it was expected that student perception of respect for belongings would increase from 49 percent to 70 percent by 2013.

The drive to improve students’ sense of belonging and connectedness to school as a safe and productive learning environment was achieved through a number of initiatives and whole school programs.

Mawson Primary School delivers a successful self awareness focus through the Human Values program which was further refined and combined with SCARF (Support, Caring Acceptance, Respect and Friendliness) in 2009.

Circle Time was introduced and used to regularly discuss the targeted value each fortnight in all classes and a value is reported in the school newsletter, on the outside notice board, and at assembly each fortnight. Class Buddies introduced in recent years has further developed the culture of belonging and the SRC was reinvigorated.

Sporting equipment was made available during break times to assist students in positive playground behaviour as well as opening the school computer lab and library on a variety of days during the week. This resulted in a reduction in the number of playground behaviour incidents. Procedures were put in place for executive staff to track and further follow-up on ongoing or repeated behaviour.

Students were given additional leadership opportunities including the year 5 Eco Leaders, year 5/6 library monitors and Book Week leaders. Year 5/6 was also engaged in the Young Leaders program 2013 and Kids Matter in 2012.

The school has successfully established consistent whole school practices that are used and followed by all staff. This has improved students’ sense of belonging and connectedness to school and has resulted to the school successfully achieving all of its targets as demonstrated by student satisfaction data.

Evidence cited and its validation


Student behaviour database

Student Code of Conduct

School newsletters

SRC documentation.
Priority 7 High expectations that all students can achieve quality work, care for, and take pride in the school environment.

The expected target for this priority area includes increased satisfaction in parent, staff and student data that the school has high expectations in all that it does.

System and school based data have been collected as performance measures. The results of the satisfaction surveys, PIPS and NAPLAN are shared with the school community. These results along with student survey results are shared with staff to improve student outcomes. The Quality Teaching model is used as a tool for teacher reflection and to improve pedagogical practices.

Mawson Primary School was successfully nominated for the ACT Artist in Schools program. An artist was employed to work with staff and students to create 1300 examples of the letters of the alphabet. These have been used when publishing promotional material to market the school.

Mawson Primary engaged an Indigenous elder to work with Indigenous students to create two paintings reflecting the Building Education Revolution work. Students also had the opportunity of dancing at a regional dance performance.

Student achievement is acknowledged and celebrated at weekly assemblies and in the school newsletter. Student work is also displayed throughout the school. Students are encouraged to write goals for their learning each term. The goals are reflected upon at three-way interviews when parents are present and new goals set.

Parents and staff have worked to create an outdoor environment that invites students to engage in physical activity. New playgrounds and a sandpit have been created. The Building Education Revolution enabled the school to refurbish the library, administration area and senior classrooms. A designated Environment Centre was constructed with cooking facilities and eight garden beds. Student leaders are encouraged to take action to create sustainable practices within the school.

To improve some behavioural concerns and to enable students to be more productive in their learning throughout the day, a decision was taken to change eating times. Feedback to the changed times has been mostly positive with an improvement in harmonious social interactions on the playground evident. The introduction of Restorative Practices and Circle Time has provided staff with the skills and strategies to manage student behaviours at Mawson Primary School.

During the life of the plan there has been an overall 10 percent growth in satisfaction of all stakeholders since 2010. The panel commends Mawson Primary School on developing a positive school culture with high expectations.

Evidence cited and its validation

Satisfaction survey results 2009-2012
Sample of school newsletter “School Week”
Student engagement and feedback survey 2012
Student weekly goal worksheet sample
ACT Artists in Schools program selection documentation 2012
Priority 8 Strengthened home/school partnerships through participation in school organisation and governance.

The expected outcome for this priority was to increase parent/carer satisfaction that community partnerships are valued and maintained to 80 percent and to increase parent /carer satisfaction with their children’s education at the school to 85 percent.

Community partnerships are highly valued by the school. At the start of each school year a Creating Our Community event is held which involves the community sharing food, games and conversations. During the school year many opportunities are provided for families to engage with the school through whole school events including Mawson Primary School’s student Art show, Family Science Night, Science Fair and China Day.

Partnerships are also developed with Indigenous Australian families through the Personal Learning Plan (PLP) process and collaboration with neighbouring schools to provide sporting and cultural opportunities for students. A joint Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) was developed and the School Board consulted with Indigenous Australian families before implementation.

The school has an active Parents and Citizens Association (P&C) who have organized school fundraising events that have contributed to the purchase of a data projector and screen for the hall and a shade structure for the play equipment. The P&C has also funded Mathletics for the last three years and purchased a number of iPads. The P&C are currently trialing a Facebook page and have been involved in a working bee to landscape the Environment Centre.

Information regarding learning is communicated through the school newsletter, assemblies, information sessions, ‘getting to know your child’ questionnaire and the school website. Term overviews are sent home at the beginning of each term. Literacy and Numeracy Information Nights are held in Term 2 each year. Feedback regarding engagement, timing and the value of events has been sought annually from parents, students and staff.

The 2011 and 2012 satisfaction data indicates that the school has successfully exceeded the target of 80 percent and that parents perceive partnerships are valued and maintained. The panel acknowledges the school’s concern of a 30 percent survey completion rate and the large proportion of EAL/D families that may have affected the result, and encourages the school to continue to explore alternative methods to increase the response rates.

Evidence cited and its validation

Parent Satisfaction Survey results 2009-2012
Communication and consultation surveys
2011 Mawson Primary School Survey to Parents
Parent Satisfaction Survey results 2009-2012 communication

Priority 9 To ensure Mawson preschool provides high level services that contribute to each child’s learning and development.

The expected outcome of this priority has been to ensure that the Preschool provides a quality program for all students and that it will be nationally accredited in 2014.
School incorporates a preschool that is amalgamated with the Primary School and is recognised as a crucial first step in a child’s formal learning.

One qualified early childhood teacher with an Education Assistant, teach two classes of 24 children, each with a 30 hour program on a 2–3 day cycle. The preschool is located within the floor plan of the primary school building with a designated outdoor area attached. The National Quality Framework, ratified by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG), identifies the National Quality Standards to ensure high quality and consistent early childhood education and care across Australia. These Standards assist the school to identify strengths and identified areas for improvement within the preschool. A Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) is currently being developed and it is anticipated that the Preschool program will be assessed in 2014.

Preschool enrolments have remained steady over the past four years. There has been a 20 percent increase in preschool students transitioning to kindergarten in recent years.

The preschool has introduced the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) into their planning and programming. Written reflections provide evidence of the cycle of planning, documenting, observing and evaluating and also contribute to the refinement of learning plans by addressing children’s interests, ideas, culture and knowledge.

Evidence of learning outcomes and children’s engagement is visible within the classroom through displays, photos, individual student portfolios, a mid-year report and end of year Learning and Development Statement.

There is a focus on building positive relationships with children and families through surveys, reflection books, information evenings, Individual Learning Plans, establishment of the Mawson Preschool Parent Association and multi-cultural resources. Preschool children have a primary school buddy, attend assemblies, the library and participate in special activities such as shared reading, craft and sporting events.

A variety of information is made available to families through a new comprehensive handbook for parents, the school website, displays, newsletters and weekly group learning reflection books. Outdoor, developmental play is planned for each day.

A preschool philosophy statement has been created by the staff. Professional learning has focused on the implementation of the Early Learning Years Framework, the National Quality Standards Framework requirements and Teaching ESL Students in Mainstream Classrooms.

Continuity of staff has provided stability to the preschool team. A Document Location Guide has been developed with records and information stored appropriately to ensure confidentiality.

Evidence cited and its validation

Preschool to kinder enrolment data 2009-2012
Preschool Philosophy document
Handbook for Parents
Document Location Guide
Family survey about child’s interests
Mid-year progress report template
Learning and Development Statement template.
Section C: School improvement planning and implementation

PART 3: Reflection

During the four year school improvement cycle the school has experienced significant change in staffing profile, classroom practice and student learning expectations in addition to the complex task of addressing nine priority areas.

The panel noted that the creation of an overarching school strategic plan for the next school improvement cycle would provide staff the opportunity to focus on a smaller number of core priority areas. This would ensure a clear direction for all stakeholders.

The school has demonstrated a commitment that all students experience a rich and balanced education and has made ongoing, conscientious efforts to keep the school community informed of the plans, directions and school achievements.

The school improvement process has provided the impetus required to create a shared belief about student learning and to focus staff, students and community with the intent of improving student learning outcomes.

This resulted in all stakeholders being actively involved in the implementation of and engagement with all school priority areas.

The validation process has demonstrated the successful work that has occurred around the school’s vision, values and focus on establishing and maintaining positive home school partnerships.

Changes in teaching staff, as well as the number of part time teachers, including Chinese language teachers, have made achieving the communication priority target a challenge. The panel is confident that the actions taken by the school have provided a solid foundation in this area enabling future growth and improvement.

During the implementation of the plan, the school faced many challenges in articulating consistency in curriculum delivery and documentation, for Mandarin Immersion and mainstream teachers. The leadership team collaborated with teachers on the trialling and implementation of documents and assessment tools, as well as the professional learning requirements of all or individual teachers.

The panel acknowledges the school’s ongoing commitment to persisting with clearly articulating and clarifying the school vision and beliefs about teaching and learning and establishing consistent practices in literacy and numeracy, particularly in the senior school. Opportunities exist to align quality practice in the junior school.

There has been an increase in teacher commitment to shared accountability and transparency of data, with a higher level of teacher reflection on student progress and collaboration on strategies to improve student achievement in literacy and numeracy. The validation process has also highlighted that, while the school has been successful in this area, further work is still required to ensure the harmonious collaboration of quality practice in all aspects of the program whether that be in English or Mandarin.

During the life of this plan there have been changes in educational directions and priorities at national and system levels. The implementation of both the *Early Years Learning Framework* and *National Quality Standards Framework* has challenged the leadership and preschool teaching team. This created opportunities for interschool collaboration between executive and
teachers at Torrens, Mawson, Farrer and Melrose High Schools resulting in the sharing of best practice at preschool, primary and high school levels.

Section D: Commendations and recommendations

The past four years have seen the implementation of a number of programs to improve student outcomes and the achievement of the school plan. Mawson Primary School students, staff and parents are to be congratulated on the many successes throughout the life of the school improvement cycle.

The validation panel commends Mawson Primary School on the following:

1. The growth in student literacy and numeracy achievement across the school as evidenced by school, NAPLAN and PIPS.
2. The ongoing commitment to ensure consistency of pedagogical practices and documentation.
3. The journey the school has taken in developing a positive and productive school climate where respectful relationships exist between students, staff and the community.
4. Valuing and further developing the Mandarin Immersion Program at Mawson Primary School.
5. The ongoing work undertaken by the preschool staff and school executive to align practices to achieve NQSF accreditation.

The validation panel makes the following recommendations:

1. The school develops an overarching four year strategic plan to focus and guide future school improvement ensuring a critical few key priority areas and performance measures are developed and monitored through Annual Operating Plans.
2. That data collection and rigorous analysis drives current practice and initiatives are evaluated to ensure maximum effect on student learning. This will enable the school to take a more targeted and differentiated approach to the identification of teaching strategies in the new strategic plan.
3. To embed consistent quality pedagogical practices and documentation across the school.
4. To further develop the unique Mandarin Immersion program to ensure a sustainable, purposeful and high quality program is delivered while still meeting the achievement standards of the Australian Curriculum.