



**ACT**  
Government  
Education

**EXTERNAL REVIEW  
REPORT for  
FADDEN PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**2016**

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## Introduction: Overview of the School Review Process

As part of the Territory's school improvement approach, public schools and colleges in the Australian Capital Territory are required to participate in an external review process every five years. This document captures the findings of the panel during this cycle of school review.

In broad terms, the panel sought to determine, through evaluation and validation, 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 review was conducted over three days and involved a wide variety of data gathering approaches including observations, interviews and documentation. This approach provided evidence for the panel to consider against the nine inter-related domains in the *National School Improvement Tool* (NSIT) that informed our commendations and recommendations.

## Section A: School Context

Fadden Primary School is located in the southern Canberra suburb of Fadden in the District of Tuggeranong. It opened as a preschool to year 6 in 1985 and is named after a former Prime Minister. The school currently has a Learning Support Unit - Autism specific (LSUA).

The current Fadden Primary School Principal, Ms Liz Wallace, has been at the school from the end of 2015 and joined the current Deputy Principal, Ms Belinda Taylor, who started at the school in June 2015. For over 12 months of the school's latest Strategic Plan it has experienced significant change in senior leadership positions.

Fadden Primary School strives to encourage every student to aim for excellence in an environment which promotes a love of learning and prepares each student for the challenges of the future. The core values of Fadden Primary school are Confidence - displaying confidence and doing ones best, Respect - respect for people onion and property and Responsibility - being responsibility and being organised.

The 2015 school board noted that the school aspires for students to leave year 6 as academically, socially and personally responsible young people.

Fadden Primary School has a current enrolment of 376 and over the life of the plan enrolment has steadily increased from 332 in 2012.

The school's average ICSEA value has remained relatively stable over the past four years, from 1086 in 2012 to currently 1089 which is above the national median of 1000.

Fadden Primary School's Priority Enrolment Area (PEA) draws from the suburb of Fadden as well as Macarthur. The in area student enrolments in 2015 was 54 percent.

A feature of staffing across the school over the life of the plan has been the maintenance of a consistent team of highly experienced staff, the majority of whom have been extended in their tenure. From 2013 - 2015 teachers with seven plus years of experience rose from 16 to 20.

There has been an average of three suspensions across terms 1- 3 in 2016. Student attendance at Fadden Primary School has been consistently high. Except for 2012, where the attendance rate was 92 percent. Attendance rates have been an average of 95 percent over each year of the plan.

Infrastructure changes at Fadden Primary School have included classroom refurbishments to create flexible contemporary digital learning environments. Environmental changes over the course of the plan were evident to the review team during the school visit but were not included in the School Summative Report contextual information.

## Section B: School Performance

Longitudinal NAPLAN data from 2012 -2016 demonstrates that the school has significantly improved student mean scores in the areas of reading, spelling and grammar and punctuation at the year 3 level. In 2012, the mean score for reading was 404.7 and by 2016 this had increased by 63.4 points to 468.1. In 2012, the mean score for spelling was 388.2 and by 2016 this had increased by 62.9 points to 451.1. Similarly, in 2012, the mean score for grammar and punctuation was 402.7 and by 2016 this had increased by 60.5 points to 463.2. From 2013 -2015, the school attained comparable mean scores in the areas of reading and numeracy to those achieved by schools with a similar ICSEA value. Furthermore, from 2013 – 2016 Fadden Primary School has achieved all year 3 Directorate set targets, when taking into consideration the confidence intervals, in the areas of reading and numeracy.

From 2012 Fadden Primary School has achieved all year 5 Directorate set targets in reading and numeracy, when taking into consideration the confidence intervals, except in 2014 when they did not achieve either. However, year 5 longitudinal NAPLAN data from 2012 – 2015 indicates a decline in NAPLAN mean scores in all areas.

Performance Indicators in Primary Schools (PIPS) results from 2012- 2015 show that Fadden Primary School students have less than or similar statistical results to the ACT average on the initial implementation of the assessment in term 1. By term 4, when the assessment is again administered, the students become statistically ahead of their ACT peers in reading and stay statistically similar in numeracy. In mathematics an average of 91 percent of students, and in reading with an average of 95 percent of students, are making expected or better than expected growth over the four years.

Student perception data has shown a steady decline in most areas surveyed from 2012 to 2015. This is most significant in the areas to do with student safety and behaviour management, as well as maintenance of the school. Similarly, parent satisfaction data - while showing less of a longitudinal decline - in most areas surveyed also highlights concerns around student safety and the management of behaviour at the school.

The review team noted that the school has used NAPLAN and PIPS results in their 2012-2016 Strategic Plan as the main means of identifying improvement (trend data) over time and recommends that the school invest in professional learning (PL) and resources that will allow them to track other rich data sets that they collect over the life of their next school improvement cycle. This should allow them to better triangulate data as a means of identifying areas of strength and development.

Data collected from 2013-2015 in relation to A-E grades shows a consistent spread of grades with most students achieving at a C grade level in English and mathematics. The longitudinal data shows that from 2013-2015 that the school has seen a reduction in the number of C and D grades, and an increase of A and B grades, being achieved by the student population in English and mathematics.

Throughout the life of the plan year 3 NAPLAN data shows that the percentage of students achieving in the top two bands has risen over time from 39 percent in 2012 to 75 percent in 2016, likewise in year 3 numeracy students achieving in the top two bands has risen from 39 percent in 2012 to 49 percent in 2016. The year 5 NAPLAN data indicates that from 2012- 2016 there has been a decline in the number of year 5 students achieving in the top two bands from 61 percent to 45 percent in reading and from 43 percent to 24 percent in numeracy.

## Evidence cited

- School Strategic Plan 2012-2015
- Annual Operating/Action Plans 2012-2016
- Annual Board Reports 2012-2015
- NAPLAN data 2012-2016
- PIPS data 2012-2015
- Satisfaction Survey Data 2012-2016

## Section C: School Improvement Planning and Implementation

Fadden Primary School was last reviewed in 2011 and the following recommendations within the 2011 School Review Report were included in the next School Strategic Plan.

- Implement an effective learning and assessment program that uses data to monitor the progress of every child's learning.
- Build a professional learning community that is focused on the continuous improvement of teaching and learning.
- Review and evaluate the school coaching and mentoring strategy to build sustainability and accountability with clear links to student outcomes.
- Enable an explicit focus on teaching of mathematics P-6.
- Align reading and writing teaching, assessment and student feedback approach K- 6.

The 2012-2015 School Strategic Plan was developed in collaboration with all stake holders with the support of Michael King from Quality Learning Australia (QLA). QLA tools were used to analyse school and system data and priorities areas for improvement. This process culminated in the development of a Fadden Primary School System Map which outlined the vision, values, priorities, inputs, performance measures and outputs.

The strategic priority areas identified from the recommendations above were:

- Strategic Priority 1: Aligned curriculum linked to purposeful, consistent and ongoing assessment
- Strategic Priority 2: Focused engagement of educators and students in continuous improvement of instruction and learning
- Strategic Priority 3: Pedagogy that encapsulates high intellectual quality, a quality learning environment and significant for all students
- Strategic Priority 4: Strong productive working relationships based on respect and responsibility.

Fadden Primary School has developed a 2012- 2015 School Strategic Plan and subsequent Annual Action Plans. Due to leadership changes and school challenges, the Strategic Plan was extended to include 2016 and priority area key improvement strategies and new targets were established in consultation with staff in late 2015 by the new principal. School and system data was collected and collated in GradeXpert however much of this data was not available to the current principal and leadership team leading to the loss of corporate knowledge and ability to show long term progress against the priority areas.

## **Strategic Priority 1: Aligned curriculum linked to purposeful, consistent and ongoing assessment**

### Key Improvement Strategies for 2012- 2014

- Develop staff capacity to collect, analyse and discuss a range of student data.
- Introduce and evaluate aligned mathematics pedagogy K-6.
- Align reading and writing teaching, assessment and student feedback approach K-6.

### Key Improvement Strategies for 2015

- Develop staff capacity to collect, analyse and discuss a range of student data.

### Key Improvement Strategies for 2016

- Align reading and writing teaching, assessment and student feedback approach K-6.
- Continue the implementation and evaluation of aligned mathematics pedagogy K-6.

## **Achievements**

Over the life of the plan it was reported in the school's Summative Evaluation Report that there had been work to develop staff capacity to analyse and discuss a range of student assessment data. It was stated that the school had introduced and evaluated mathematics, reading and writing pedagogy K-6 that is aligned to assessment, and that marking guides were developed for writing at each year level. The review however cannot find evidence to support this to be the case.

In 2012 and 2013 the school set targets of a 12 percent increase in teacher confidence in the use of objective data sets. The 2012 Annual Board Report claims that this target was exceeded reflecting a 37 percentage point increase from 56 percent to 93 percent. Similarly the 2013 Annual Board Report claims that this target was exceeded reflecting a 16 percentage point increase from 77percent to 93percent.

The panel cannot actually identify a source of data that supports this claim.

In 2014 there was a change from one to three targets. The targets were:

- a 10 percentage point increase in the teachers ability to use objective data
- an increase in the percentage of students achieving expected NAPLAN growth from 2013 in reading, writing and numeracy
- a decrease in the percentage of students achieving below expected percentile growth.

In relation to target 1, the 2014 Annual Board Report claims that the percentage increase in teachers' ability to use objective data was again exceeded with an 11 percentage point increase on their 2013 data. At the end of 2014 the School Improvement Survey data on this variable was reported, in the Board Report, to be 100 percent.

Considering the school started at 93 percent at the end of 2013, the improvement target of 10 percentage points was unobtainable. Again, the panel cannot actually identify a source of data that supports this claim.

In relation to target 2, the 2014 Annual Board Report shows that the school from 2013- 2014, did not meet the NAPLAN expected growth targets of 80 percent for reading, 65 percent for writing and 71 percent for numeracy.

Similarly in relation to target 3 the school did not meet the 2014 target for the number of students achieving below the national minimum standards in NAPLAN writing or numeracy, but they did achieve the target in reading.

In 2015 there were no targets set for the three improvement measures identified across 2012, 2013 and 2014 above. The 2015 targets were in relation to school based pre and post numeracy assessment data, the percentage of teachers using ACARA work samples for moderation and the percentage of students in the top and bottom two NAPLAN bands. The 2015 Annual Board Report indicates that 100 percent of teachers were using ACARA work samples and pre and post-test numeracy assessment data.

The targets in relation to NAPLAN show that in year 5 the target was met except for decreasing the percentage of students achieving in the bottom two bands in writing and increasing the percentage of students achieving in the top two bands for mathematics. In year 3 all targets were achieved except for decreasing the percentage of students achieving in the bottom two bands in writing and numeracy.

In 2016 the targets in relation to parent satisfaction with their child's education and the school meeting directorate NAPLAN targets can be measured. The percentage of kindergarten students achieving at or above standard in PIPS reading and maths is unable to be measured at this point of time.

The school met all ACT Directorate NAPLAN targets set but they did not meet their target in relation to increasing parent satisfaction with their child's education.

The panel can concur that while the school currently recognises growth as a necessary priority, the school was unable to report on expected growth over the four years due to a lack of consistent targets.

## **Strategic Priority 2: Focused engagement of educators and students in continuous improvement of instruction and learning**

### Key Improvement Strategy for 2012

- Develop and align the staff coaching and mentoring strategy to class assessment profile and case management meetings.

### Key Improvement Strategies for 2013

- Develop and align staff coaching and mentoring strategy to class assessment profile and case management meetings.
- Develop a culture of reflective practice, Introduce David Langford Quality Learning approach.

### Key Improvement Strategy for 2014, 2015 and 2016

- Develop and align staff coaching and mentoring strategy to build sustainability and accountability with clear links to student outcomes.

## **Achievements**

From 2012 - 2013 the target for this priority was set around the school improvement teacher satisfaction area of 'Improved teacher engagement with lesson observation and feedback and lesson study'. This target as measured by the following statement.

*Teachers welcoming classroom observation by peers and school leaders was achieved in 2012 with a 14% increase of teachers that strongly agreed. In 2013 the target was a 12% increase and this target was not achieved as there was only a 10% increase achieved, from 33% to 43% of teachers agreeing with the statement.*

Again the panel cannot actually identify a source of data that supports this claim.

In 2014 a school target was set on, 'teachers collaboratively plan, deliver and review the effectiveness of lessons'. The Board Report is silent on the school's achievement against this target and evidence was not available to the review team for further determinations.

In 2015 two school targets were set in relation to the following statements:

- 100% of classroom teachers provide differentiation in learning
- student work samples demonstrated differentiation of tasks with clear links to the Australian Curriculum.

These targets were not reported on within the 2015 Annual Board Report and the current leadership team were unable to provide any data sets to provide information about progress towards the targets set within 2015.

In 2016 the school set one target of increasing staff perception data from 86 percent to 95 percent in relation to staff being provided with useful feedback about their practice. This target was not achieved with only 75 percent of staff agreeing.

## **Strategic Priority 3: Pedagogy that encapsulates high intellectual quality, a quality learning environment and significance for all students**

Key Improvement Strategies for 2012

- Implementation of high quality pedagogy in all classrooms.
- Ensure all school curriculum are relevant, current and of high intellectual quality.
- Develop a culture of reflective practice.

Key Improvement Strategies for 2013

- Implementation of high quality pedagogy in all classrooms.
- Develop a culture of reflective practice based around the use of effective feedback.

Key Improvement Strategy for 2014, 2015 and 2016

- Implementation of high quality pedagogy in all classrooms.

## **Achievements**

The performance measures in the School Plan to set annual targets included:

- increasing the percentage of students in the top two NAPLAN bands and decreasing the percentage of students in the bottom two bands

- ACER PAT Maths and reading comprehension data demonstrates improving student growth
- Fadden school improvement survey demonstrates teacher engagement with lesson study and
- PIPS results demonstrate growth above the system mean.

While the school did not comment on these priority area targets in their Summative Evaluation Report, the panel noted there was variability of results in achieving the targets for this priority. For 2012 and 2013 there were no targets set for increasing the percentage of students achieving in the top two bands or decreasing the percentage of students achieving in the bottom two NAPLAN bands in all test domains in years 3 and 5. A target set in 2014 was to increase by 2 percentage points the students in the top two bands. This was only achieved in year 3 reading and year 5 numeracy. Furthermore, a target was set to decrease the percentage of students in the bottom two NAPLAN bands by 2 percentage points in all year 3 test domains. This was only achieved in writing.

In 2015 the targets in relation to NAPLAN show that in year 5 the target was met except for reducing the percentage of students achieving in the bottom two bands in writing and increasing the percentage of students in the top two bands for numeracy. In year 3 all targets were achieved except for reducing the percentage of students in the bottom two bands in writing and numeracy.

Targets were set in 2012 and 2013 for ACER Progressive Achievement Tests (PAT) in reading comprehension (PAT-R) showing an increase in the number of students achieving growth. The targets were only partially achieved. No target was set in 2014.

In 2014, 2015 and 2016 there were no school PAT-R or PAT Maths targets set.

Performance Indicators in Primary School (PIPS) results from 2012 to 2015 show that Fadden Primary School students have less than or similar results to the ACT average on the initial implementation of the assessment in term 1. By term 4, when the assessment was again administered, the students were ahead of their ACT peers in reading and were similar in numeracy. An average of 91 percent of students made expected or better than expected growth over the four years in mathematics and 95 percent in reading.

#### **Strategic Priority 4: Strong productive working relationships based on respect and responsibility**

##### Key Improvement Strategies for 2012

- Develop awareness, understanding, use and practice of the Fadden values of respect, confidence and responsibility for all stakeholders.
- Introduce improved practices and procedures for communication between school and families.

##### Key Improvement Strategies for 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016

- Develop awareness, understanding, use and practice of the Fadden values of respect, confidence and responsibility for all stakeholders.

## **Achievements**

The performance measures, set to annual targets, were for Staff, Student and Parent Satisfaction Survey results to show improved communication and understanding of school values.

In 2012 the target, as measured in the Parent Satisfaction Survey, showed a 2 percentage point improvement to 89 percent in the understanding of values, compared to the 2011 base of 87 percent. The target could not be reported on in 2013 due to a change in the survey items. In 2014, 2015 and 2016 there was no target set in relation to the development of values and in 2014 the priority was not actioned.

In 2012 the target that the Parent Satisfaction Survey shows a 3 percentage point improvement in positive management of student behaviour was set. In 2012 88 percent of parents agreed that behaviour management was effective at their child's school, which was an increase from 75 percent in 2011. In 2013 the target of a 3 percentage point increase was not achieved with only 75 percent of parents agreeing that behaviour management was effective at their child's school.

Targets in 2015 focused on improvement to items relating to student teacher relationships, weekly lesson implementation utilising Friendly Schools Plus and the evaluation each term from the KidsMatter team.

The review team notes that Fadden Primary School met the target of 100 percent of teachers incorporating Friendly Schools Plus social and emotional learning into their weekly programs.

Four survey statements were used to measure an increase in student teacher relationships. The review team found that the data did not provide evidence of an 8 percent increase in achievement for any of these.

## **Evidence cited**

- School Strategic Plan 2012-2015
- Annual Operating/Action Plans 2012-2016
- Annual Board Reports 2012-2015
- NAPLAN data 2012-2016
- PIPS data 2012-2015
- Satisfaction Survey Data 2012-2016

## **Reflections**

The review team identified that from 2012 to 2015 there was a decrease in parent and student satisfaction in regard to student safety. It was pleasing to see that while the school did not meet their 2016 targets in this area, there has been a significant increase in both parent and student perceptions from 2015.

Narratives against key improvement strategies for the four school priority areas were included in the Annual Board Reports and made available to the review team. These were difficult to align with each year's Annual Operating/Action Plan and some school priorities reported against changed from year to year, as did the targets used to measure them. The review team suggests that while key improvement strategies may change across years, maintaining measurable targets for each priority would be desirable to know if progress has been achieved over the life of the plan. Likewise for

reporting against identified targets in the school board reports. The actions articulated under each key improvement strategy should reflect the focus for that particular year.

## **Section D: National Tools Self-Evaluation Results**

### **National School Improvement Tool**

At Fadden Primary School the staff worked in small groups during term 1 2016 to determine where school practice fits under each of the nine NSIT domains. They identified how they knew why domains were shaded and also what could be enhanced or improved.

At Fadden Primary School the combined time reviewers spent across the three days, in conversations with the principal, leaders, teachers, Learning Support Assistants, students, parents and board members was approximately 42 hours. Another 8 hours was spent on reviewer moderation, writing and preparation for presentations to leaders and staff.

The review team was satisfied that they had substantial, quality, evidence - through reading, questioning and observing - to be confident of the line of sight and the accuracy of their NSIT findings.

There was alignment between the determinations of the review team and the schools self rating.

The panel noted the following in relation to the **An Explicit Improvement Agenda** domain.

- *The school has developed an agenda for improvement 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.*
- *The leadership team has analysed school performance data 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. This is reflected in an eagerness to learn from research evidence and from other schools that have achieved significant improvements.*
- *Plans for improvement do not appear to have been clearly communicated, widely implemented or to have impacted significantly on teachers' day-to-day work. Targets for improvement are not specific (e.g., not accompanied by timelines).*
- *The school's focus on data is driven more by external requirements (e.g., NAPLAN)*
- *Although there is an expressed commitment to improvement, this is not reflected in a high level of enthusiasm for personal change on the part of staff. The communication of performance data to the school community tends to be sporadic and/or is limited only to information that the school is required to report.*

### **Comments and Findings**

Fadden Primary School has developed a 2012 - 2015 School Strategic Plan and subsequent Annual Operating/Action Plans (AAP). Due to leadership changes the Strategic Plan was extended to include 2016 and the 2016 Annual Action Plan reflected four priority areas established by the new principal in consultation with staff in late 2015. These priority areas are reflected within the four priorities of the 2012- 2015 School Strategic Plan.

Communication between the school board and the principal was evident in relation to the Summative Evaluation Report and the 2016 AAP.

Time is provided for teams to plan together within the school day. Years P- 2 and 3- 6 team meetings are led by an executive member each fortnight when required. When team meetings are not required executive members attend team planning meetings.

Current leaders use NAPLAN trend data to inform decision making about future student learning directions.

Within the **Analysis and Discussion of Data** domain, the panel verified the following.

- *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.*
- *Time is set aside (e.g., on pupil free days and in staff meetings) for the discussion of data and the implications of data for school policies and classroom practices.*
- *School leaders pay close attention to data provided to them about the performance of the school (e.g., NAPLAN results; Year 12 results) and identify areas in which the school is performing relatively poorly or well.*
- *Tests (e.g., commercially available reading tests) may be used by some teachers, but generally are not used as part of a whole-school assessment strategy.*
- *An ad hoc approach exists to building staff skills in the analysis, interpretation and use of classroom data.*
- *Software may be used for the analysis of school results, including the performances of priority groups, but analyses generally do not extend to studies of improvement or growth.*
- *Information about the school's performance is communicated to the school community. There is limited engagement with parents and families around school data.*

## **Comments and Findings**

Previous student achievement data in GradeXpert has been corrupted. The school is in the process of establishing a new collection system. The school's assessment schedule was shared in term 1 however the capturing of this data is currently in an unusable format. Future use of the range of summative data available in 2016 may support teachers to regularly triangulate information regarding student progress.

Meeting structures allow for student data to be discussed in teams however there is varying evidence about the depth of discussion and use of data to inform practice at team meetings.

Embedding the use of disciplined dialogue protocols at regular executive led team meetings may assist to build teacher data literacy skill, confidence and capacity.

Clear processes for teachers to refer students to the Student Support Team have been established using some identified student data as a springboard for conversation. A Response to Intervention (RTI) framework is being used and this will be written into the Safe and Supportive Schools Policy being developed in 2016.

With respect to **A Culture that Promotes Learning** domain, the panel noted the following.

- *The 'tone' of the school reflects a school-wide commitment to purposeful, successful 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.*
- *Classrooms are generally orderly, although some are more so than others. Non-attendance is an issue for a small minority of students.*
- *The school effectively implements its policies, for example. Disruptive behaviour, bullying and harassment are dealt with promptly. The school has expectations for how students should behave and interact with one another, relationships are caring and respectful. Some staff time is taken up dealing with behaviour problems.*
- *Staff morale is satisfactory.*

### **Comments and Findings**

The review team confirms that school satisfaction data from 2015 reflects that students, parents and teachers perceive that student behaviour management is sometimes inconsistent leading to disruptions to teaching and learning. There has been an improvement in satisfaction surveys in 2016. The leadership team has been working on ensuring a more consistent approach to the management of student behaviour and staff wellbeing.

Parents and students hold the staff and leadership team in high regard. Parents commented that the effort the school has made to improve communication has been valued. Parents value their level of involvement in the school; and the community feel there are opportunities to be involved in their child's learning. Student values were displayed in every classroom.

The Gifted and Talented Policy is in draft form, presently awaiting board ratification. This will help align existing practice including students being accelerated in Mathematics and student involvement in enrichment programs such as Tournament of Minds (TOM), early years extension days and Maths Olympiad.

The school is developing intervention structures, for example MiniLit, to support literacy attainment.

Preschool and kindergarten teachers have embedded transition activities that involve whole school events. Examples of preschool teacher inclusion as part of a wider teaching team were evident.

The panel noted the following in relation to the **Targeted Use of School Resources** domain.

- *The principal and other school leaders have introduced programs to identify and address the needs of students in the school and are sourcing and applying available resources to meet those needs.*
- *Specialist diagnostic testing is organised for a small number of students with special needs, but teachers do not routinely administer tests to better understand specific*

*learning difficulties (e.g., problems in learning to read) or individual learning needs (e.g., gifted).*

- *There are very few school-wide programs or policies designed to address the learning needs of particular student groups (e.g., gifted students, students with disabilities, students for whom English is a second language). School leaders encourage teachers to address individual learning needs in classrooms.*
- *Technology is accessible to the majority of staff and students.*

## **Comments and Findings**

Staff commented that they highly value the recently redeveloped teacher courtyard initiated by the 2015 P&C.

The kindergarten courtyard has been redeveloped, and a priority will be general grounds beautification to create learning environments that enrich and engage. Development of the outdoor learning environment for the LSUA, to take account of the sensory needs of students, will occur as funding becomes available.

Students feel that ICT is accessible and this aligns with the Student Satisfaction Survey data in 2016. Teachers commented that further resourcing of ICT in the junior grades would be appreciated. Teachers also believe that the school provides adequate learning program materials and good availability to PL.

Flexible use of human resources and additional school funds supplement the budget for Learning Support Assistants.

The school has a plan for student needs identification and referral and is developing an assessment schedule for inclusion in their RTI framework and wellbeing policies.

KidsMatter is used by Fadden Primary School as their wellbeing framework which supports the Friendly Kids, Friendly Classrooms program across the school.

Some teachers team teach however a greater use of the school's flexible open classroom and withdrawal spaces may increase teacher collaboration and shared learning embedded in practice.

Within the **An Expert Teaching Team** domain, the panel verified the following.

- *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.*
- *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 undertakes professional learning activities, although these may not always focus on a documented learning plan.*

- *The principal and leadership team are seen as supportive of, the day-to-day practice and learning of teachers.*
- *Teachers are open to constructive feedback.*
- *The school is implementing a formal process for conducting professional discussions with staff.*
- *The school's professional agenda is made explicit to staff at induction, and in staff handbooks.*
- *Where it is necessary to manage unsatisfactory staff performance, this is done professionally and effectively, and in accordance with agreed guidelines.*

## **Comments and Findings**

A thorough process had been undertaken so that all teachers were well informed about the NSIT domains and descriptors, making a contribution to school commendations and recommendations.

The school may like to consider articulating their Annual Professional Learning Plan at the beginning of the school year so that it is aligned to AITSL and the AAP, as well as making visible budget expenditure expectations.

For future consideration: engage staff in the new change agenda, quality curriculum delivery, professional reading, gathering evidence of learning from regular 'walk throughs' to inform progress and coaching and/or training around giving and receiving feedback.

Teachers commented often about how the network cluster meetings and cluster initiatives to engage students in learning across the network, build teacher capacity.

In the domain **Systematic Curriculum Delivery**, the panel noted the following.

- *The school has a plan for curriculum delivery that includes year level and term plans, but the progression of learning from year to year is not always obvious and the relationship between the pieces of the plan (the year, term and unit plans) would benefit from further clarification.*
- *School leaders talk about embedding skills such as literacy and numeracy within all subjects, but there is little evidence that school-wide strategies are in place to drive a consistent approach.*
- *Discussions about curriculum delivery tend to be sporadic and reactive with a year level focus rather than being driven by a leadership team with a whole-school approach.*

## **Comments and Findings**

It was noted that all K-6 teachers are using the Australian Curriculum to guide their work including the LSUA who also access the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF). The preschool setting uses the EYLF to inform their teaching and learning program.

The review team noted the positive response from teachers for the initiative to develop clear scope and sequence documentation for all curriculum areas. This work has already begun.

The school may consider if they continue to use and improve the central placement of planning documentation on to the T Drive so that teachers can take into account students' prior learning.

The review team noted there was high variability in the use of formative assessment strategies, success criteria and learning intentions across the school.

Sharing and documenting of planning and teaching strategies between teams would enable development of a shared understandings of both the horizontal and vertical curriculum enacted at Fadden Primary School.

In consideration of the domain **Differentiated Teaching and Learning**, the panel found the following.

- *School leaders are committed to success for all, but do not drive a strong classroom agenda to assess and identify individual learning needs or to differentiate teaching according to students' needs.*
- *Some use is made of assessment instruments to identify individual strengths and weaknesses and starting points for teaching.*
- *Some use is made of differentiated teaching (e.g., differentiated reading groups in the early primary years), but in most classes teachers teach the same curriculum to all students with similar levels of individual support.*
- *Regular assessments of student learning are undertaken, but these often are summative and disconnected (e.g., relating to different topics) rather than exploring long-term progress in students' knowledge, skills and understandings over time.*
- *Reports to parents generally do not show progress or provide guidance to parents on actions they might take.*

## **Comments and Findings**

The main features of differentiation evident to the review team were in the forms of questions asked, instructional workshops, ability grouping, team teaching and group size adjustment. Differentiation was not by whole school design. Implementation was dependent on individual teachers and teaching team practices.

Teachers spoke about differentiation practices with varying degrees of confidence and knowledge. Teachers have some understanding about adjustment of tasks to address learner needs however this was not consistent or highly evident in planning and assessment.

The review panel suggest the creation of a reliable means of storing data centrally so that it can be used to inform strategic planning and differentiation of classroom practice. Further whole school PL around the use of data may be of benefit.

The active involvement of parents in learning journeys and parent/teacher interviews also show ways in which the school reports student progress made over time and how student growth is communicated to parents.

Students and parents commented on the value and enjoyment of extension programs such as the math enrichment volunteer program, TOM and Math Olympiad.

The panel noted the following regarding the domain **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, although the principal and other senior leaders may not themselves have clear positions on the kinds of teaching they wish to see occurring across the school or be 'hands on' in driving improved teaching practices.*
- *School leaders are explicit about their desire to see effective teaching occurring throughout the school, but are less clear about what this might look like. School leaders take a close interest in the school's literacy and numeracy results.*
- *There is some clarity about what students are expected to learn, but a lack of balance in teaching methods (e.g., over-reliance on whole-group teaching or very little explicit teaching).*

## **Comments and Findings**

Environmental print and the provision of literacy resources in all classrooms were highly evident across the school.

Students were routinely observed to be highly engaged in learning tasks and spoke confidently to reviewers about what they had been asked to achieve. There was less clarity from students about how connections could be made between learning or how they knew what to do to improve. Some classrooms had evidence of learning being co-constructed and 'bump it up' statements, however in the main the review team noted less evidence in classrooms around assessment for learning, student learning goals, feedback and learning intentions.

The school has identified the need to establish a shared understanding of what quality teaching and learning at Fadden Primary School looks, sounds and feels like. This will inform staff induction, PL and coaching.

Strategies are being developed to build on the 'teacher talks' strategy which aligns a teacher AITSL self audit with verbal and written feedback from executive team members and the principal. These strategies will enable coaching protocols to support the work of teachers in their classrooms around their agreed and aligned goals.

In the final domain **School-Community Partnerships**, the panel found the following.

- *The school has established one or more partnerships with families, local businesses and/or community organisations. Partnerships have generally been initiated by the senior leadership team and have their support.*
- *Each partnership brings staff and students of the school together with external partners such as families, other education or training institutions, local businesses and/or community organisations.*
- *Attention has been given to communication and to the sharing of experiences within the partnership; however, there may be no formal plan for reviewing the partnership's outcomes and effectiveness.*
- *There is evidence that the school's partnerships are being implemented as intended.*

## **Comments and Findings**

Fadden Primary School has numerous connections with families and outside organisations. Most recently these partnerships include highly organised and formal connections such as; the Child and Family Center, Fresh Tastes, P&C, Constable Kenny Koala, Australian Early Development Census (AEDC), Cyber Safety, After School Care, interpreter services, reading parent helpers. A wide range of more informal partnerships providing extra curricula activities also exist, such as Footsteps Dance Company, Taekwondo, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander performances, Pillars of the Community Mosaic, Canberra Raiders, Gala Day presenters, Anzac Day speakers and local businesses. Consideration could be given to establishing a way for the school to review the ongoing effectiveness of partnerships with all stake holders, e.g. documented reflection at staff meetings.

Plans for a Kitchen Garden will further involve parents in its establishment and program implementation.

The KidsMatter team includes both parent and teacher representatives who have all attended training.

The review team wishes to affirm the school's intention to establish a volunteer skills register for use by teachers to tap into parent, business and community expertise to support learning in 2017.

### **National Safe Schools Framework: School Audit Tool**

Fadden Primary School asked at random a selection of approximately 30 staff and parents to complete the National Safe Schools Framework: School Audit Tool in mid 2016. These results were compiled and the analysis reflected that the surveys showed room for improvement in most areas. However there were six identified areas of strength, with three most significant areas for improvement.

The school indicated in the School Summative Report that improvement was required particularly in the following three elements:

- policies and procedures
- engagement, skill development and safe school curriculum
- early intervention and targeted support

The review team found that since the beginning of 2016, with the appointment of a new substantive principal and the hard work of leaders and teachers, significant progress has already been made towards improvement initiatives in the three identified elements, many of which are mentioned in commendations and in recommendations as a continuation from the important work that has already begun.

## Section E: Commendations and Recommendations

### Commendations

The review team commends Fadden Primary School for the following.

1. The school's commitment, through multiple initiatives, to embedding the school values of respect, responsibility and confidence. This has underpinned the school's ability to create positive and caring relationships with students, staff, families and wider community members and it is helping to ensure that the interactions between all stakeholders are caring, polite and inclusive.
2. Teachers' on-going resilience and ability to maintain focus on providing students with consistent learning opportunities while managing a large amount of challenge within the school environment and change within the leadership structure. Throughout this time community support has stayed steady and student numbers have been maintained.
3. The Fadden Preschool team's diligence in creating an attractive and stimulating learning environment that fosters and encourages creativity and a love of learning. Furthermore, the team's efforts in achieving accreditation at the exceeding level across five National Quality Standards.
4. The Leadership team's ability to re-establish a culture that is focused on staff and student wellbeing and ensures a sense of belonging and optimism.
5. The establishment of the year 6 student parliament and its capacity to enable strong authentic student voice and involvement in school decision making. This is evidenced in the students fundraising efforts for local and national charities as well as the school's commitment in providing students with opportunities to have a say in how aspects of the school affect them, such as lunch time activities.
6. There is an obvious sense of pride in the school. Students, staff and parents speak very highly of the school. Students and parents feel welcome and listened to and there are strong relationships between teachers and students. The review team can affirm that the parents value the calm community feel that has been established this year at Fadden Primary School with the opportunities they have to be involved at the school and the school's involvement with the wider community.

## **Recommendations**

The review team recommends that Fadden Primary School pay attention to the following opportunities when developing their 2017-2021 School Strategic Plan and related AAPs.

1. Design the improvement agenda with a narrow and sharp focus, in collaboration with all stakeholders so that it:
  - builds on the work already done to embed the school values of confidence, respect and responsibility by creating a new shared school vision based on these school values
  - focuses whole school attention on core learning priorities based on practices that lead to measurable improvement in student learning through establishing Annual Action Plan targets that contribute to longer term Strategic Plan targets
  - includes both long and short term strategies, timelines and meaningful targets for all subject cohorts and classes, that inform teaching and that enable achievement growth to be tracked over time
  - ensures annual roles and responsibilities are aligned with key improvement strategies which embrace the work and accountability levels of leaders, teachers and administrative staff.
  
2. Continue to develop and articulate a vertically aligned Curriculum Delivery Plan for the teaching of the Australian Curriculum. Make explicit what and when teachers should teach and students should learn, monitoring how the school's written curriculum delivery plan is being implemented throughout the school. Ensure the school's curriculum plan is centrally housed and made available to families using various digital platforms.
  
3. Continue to develop consistent, documented school wide approaches based on best practice, school data, evidence and a highly reflective school culture to:
  - promote intellectual rigour where high expectations are the norm, where every minute of teaching counts and where the bar is lifted around all academic learning and well being school programs and practices. Embed multiple levels of accountability to ensure every child fulfills their potential.
  - identify specific learning needs, including learning needs for extension students, to ensure that interventions are targeted and timely. Ensure the identification process, referral documentation and student support and extension meeting processes have enabled a strategic focus on ensuring students are meeting their learning targets. The timetable of support for those students is informed and effective.
  - embed the Friendly Schools Plus whole school social and emotional learning program for all students as a proactive strategy to support positive student behaviour within the implementation of the schools Safe and Supportive Schools policy.
  - identify the school's position on the kinds of teaching and assessment practices it wishes to see occurring across the school. Embed these clear, well known, positions on pedagogical practices through the implementation of a personalised coaching model for all teachers, leaders and Learning Support Assistants.

- identify and embed the school's position on the kinds of learning program approaches it wishes to see occurring across the school, e.g. inquiry, and a balanced approach to literacy and numeracy.
- utilise reliable student achievement data to identify gaps in student learning as starting points for teaching, continually adjusting and differentiating teaching in response to progress that individuals are making. Use this data to consistently monitor learning improvement/regression across years of schooling.

## Section F: Record of School Review Process

The following people were members of the external School Review Panel for Fadden {Primary School conducted on 14-16 September 2016.

<b>Name:</b> Dianne Pekin	<b>ACER:</b> Lead Reviewer
<b>Name:</b> Matthew Holdway	<b>School:</b> Principal, Theodore Primary School

As chair of the Panel I endorse that this is a true and accurate record of the findings from the external School Review process.

<b>Name:</b> Dianne Pekin	
<b>Signature:</b> 	<b>Date:</b> 23 / 09 / 2016

As Principal of Fadden Primary School I accept the School Review Report on behalf of the school community.

<b>Name:</b> Liz Wallace	
<b>Signature:</b> 	<b>Date:</b> 28 / 10 / 2016