



**ACT**  
Government  
Education

## **Melrose High School**

Review Report Summary, 2018

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## Overview of the school review process

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Approximately a quarter of all ACT public schools are reviewed each year. The reviews are an important part of how the Directorate supports and monitors school improvement. Reviews provide schools with quality and independent feedback, tailored to the school's context. Each school is reviewed at least every five years, providing valuable opportunities for self-reflection, planning and improvement.

Reviews are undertaken by experienced educators trained in the use of the *National School Improvement Tool* (NSIT), a nationally recognised framework for reviewing teaching and learning practices. Each review team generally consists of two to three reviewers, however, the number of reviewers and length of review depends upon a range of factors, including the size and context of the school.

Reviewers closely consider each school's performance data and speak with a wide range of staff, students, parents and community members to get an accurate picture of the school. Following the review, the school receives a comprehensive report. The report outlines the key findings and recommended improvement strategies to maximise student outcomes. The report concludes with a set of commendations, affirmations and recommendations to assist in future planning and to support school-wide improvement planning.

The following summary contains the commendations, affirmations and recommendations from the review report.

### Commendations

The commendations highlight positive actions the school has taken over its last improvement cycle. Typically these actions are either complete, or embedded in school practice.

### Affirmations

The affirmations verify specific actions being undertaken by the school that are impacting positively on school improvement. These actions are typically either not yet complete and/or not yet embedded.

### Recommendations

The recommendations provide the school with evidence-based advice regarding high-value areas for future school improvement efforts. Drawn from the NSIT, recommendations are key to the school developing a sharp and narrow improvement plan.

## Commendations

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Melrose High School is commended for the following.

- The high level of trust parents have in staff of the school. They believe staff are focussed on progressing each and every child and giving students a voice in their learning.
- The focus and support of Big Picture tutors, which has created a learning environment where students are engaged and empowered in high quality learning. Parents, teachers and students spoke highly of the outcomes.
- The leadership team having a relentless focus on building student skills and knowledge in the general capabilities. This focus is a foundation of the Australian Curriculum as expressed by the 2008 Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians.
- The development of Thinking Carnival Challenge days in association with local primary schools. The success of these carnivals has resulted in improved alignment of primary school and high school practice. Students seek to enrol in this school as a result of its focus on 21st Century learning.
- The FLIP program as a successful way to engage students in learning. Parents made comment that the program has kept their children in schooling when other approaches were clearly not meeting their need.
- The science mentor program, which has provided rich authentic learning, strong connections to the scientific community, and a focus on pathways for students. This program is recognised as a model for schools across the Directorate.
- The positive staff, student, parent relationships within the school. Students spoke highly of staff and in particular staff care for student wellbeing. A culture of caring for students was also cited by teachers as a major reason for them staying on at this school. Parents said that staff are welcoming and supportive.
- The strong partnerships and programs the school has developed to support student learning in a real-world context.

## Affirmations

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The Review Team offers the following affirmations for Melrose High School.

- Teachers embracing the strategic agenda around 21st Century Essential Fluencies and making genuine attempts to adjust teaching practices to encourage students to take ownership of their learning and develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
- Developing a Response to Intervention Framework to identify and support students with literacy and numeracy challenges. With the appointment of a leader, screening processes have already been developed and interventions at the individual and classroom level are planned.
- Recently appointing a deputy principal to plan and implement strategies to further support students and teachers in whole-school practices to maximise positive behaviours.
- The many teachers who are wanting more opportunities to observe others across the school and engage in professional dialogue on practice. This is in addition to opportunities provided in professional learning communities.
- All teachers developing rubrics to guide learning and assessment, with some utilising shifts in practice to encourage student self and peer assessment.

- Teachers universally attempting to differentiate learning in the classroom as a strong focus following the change from homogeneous to heterogeneous classes this year.
- Embracing one-to-one devices, Google Classrooms and online documents storage. Teachers are using technologies to provide more stimulating and diverse opportunities for student learning while making learning tasks and assessment processes more accessible and in real time.
- Parent appreciation for teachers who are taking time to communicate learning in real time through Google Classrooms and email.

## Recommendations

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The Review Team recommends Melrose High School pays attention to the following opportunities for school improvement during the next planning cycle.

- Collaboratively develop a Melrose High School Strategic Plan 2019-2023 that is consistent with school's vision for teaching and learning, and provides a narrow and sharp agenda focussed on student outcomes, by incorporating explicit targets for student achievement that are well communicated to the school community. The plan should clearly articulate the measures and strategies for improvement in a timeline that acknowledges capacity for change. Progress towards targets should be monitored and initiatives and programs systematically evaluated for their effectiveness in producing the desired improvements in student learning and performance.
- Build upon the school's assessment plan, to create a data plan that incorporates the full range of school data. Develop processes to broaden analysis of school data to include trends over time, and ensure that through summarising, displaying and communicating, there is a common view of student achievement across the school community. Develop consistent processes across the school for staff to engage with data to inform teaching and to measure growth in student achievement over time. Build leadership and staff data literacy skills.
- Continue to collaboratively develop and implement evidenced-based structures and processes that maximise positive behaviours in the school.
- Document a professional learning plan that includes aligned processes for observation, mentoring and coaching across the school that provides opportunities to share expertise and embed agreed common practices.
- Develop an explicit, coherent, sequenced plan for curriculum delivery that identifies curriculum, teaching, and learning priorities and requirements. The plan should reflect the shared vision of the school and have a strong focus on general capabilities and cross- curriculum priorities. Strengthen teacher understanding of rubrics to provide a consistent approach across the school.
- Develop further opportunities for staff collaboration to use data (including their current knowledge, skills, learning difficulties and misunderstandings) to determine starting points for learning. Further consideration should be paid toward professional dialogue around differentiation using a variety of pedagogical practices.