



**ACT**  
Government  
Education

**EXTERNAL REVIEW  
REPORT for  
BONYTHON 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 two 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 that informed our commendations and recommendations.

## Section A: School Context

Bonython Primary School is situated in the south of Tuggeranong and the school name reflects the name of the suburb it is situated in. It was established in 1992 with 217 students, and over time has seen changing demographics reflecting an aging population to today where enrolments are gradually increasing due to the renewal of housing in the local area. Over the life of the Bonython Primary School Plan 2013-2016 (the plan) student population preschool to year 6 has seen a decline from 301 in 2012 to a low of 254 in 2015 moving up to 275 in 2016. ICSEA scores have risen then declined over the life of the plan to levels similar to 2012. The percentage of students from Language Backgrounds Other Than English (LBOTE) has remained constant and there has been an increase from 3 percent to 8 percent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Bonython has a preschool on the school grounds and a Learning Support Unit catering specifically for students with Autism. During the life of the plan the Bonython Preschool has been assessed and rated as exceeding National Quality Standard (NQS) in two areas and meeting the NQS in the other six areas.

The current School Principal, Mr Greg Terrell, arrived at the end of 2015 and the current Deputy Principal, Mr Marc Warwick, was appointed earlier that year. Over the period of the plan Bonython Primary School has had four principals and four deputy principals. The executive structure has been similar across the plan, as has the number of classroom teaching positions. There has been however significant turnover of staff in teaching positions with only one third of staff remaining for the entirety of the plan. In 2016 Bonython absorbed its Numeracy and Literacy Field Officer and Executive Teacher Professional Practice into School Leader C coaching and mentoring positions. The school recognises how the constant changes in leadership and staffing have impacted on the continuity and consistency of school life.

The Bonython Primary School values of compassion, high expectations, fairness, honesty, trustworthiness, social justice, responsibility, inclusivity and respect for people, property and the environment, all contribute of the school's vision 'Learning together for a sustainable future.'

Infrastructure enhancements over the course of the plan have included a school canteen upgrade in 2015, furniture upgrades and the early adoption of a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) strategy. These changes reflect Bonython's collaborative approach to learning.

## Section B: School Performance

In 2013 Bonython Primary School identified three strategic priorities:

- build teacher capacity and collaboration
- improve student learning outcomes
- strengthen the positive culture for all members of the school community.

Over the course of the last three years, the key priorities have been highlighted by specific actions the school has determined in its Annual Action Plans (AAP) to achieve its intended outcomes in these areas.

Longitudinal NAPLAN data from 2012-2015 demonstrates that the school has significantly improved student mean scores in the areas of reading and grammar and punctuation at a year 3 level. In 2012, the mean student score for reading was 390 and by 2015 this had increased by 43 mean scale scores to 433. The mean score for grammar and punctuation was 388 in 2012 and by 2015, this had increased to 427. In 2015, the school attained comparable mean scores to those achieved by schools with a similar ICSEA value in these two areas. In the areas of writing, spelling and numeracy, the results do not reflect a consistent improvement in mean scores.

Longitudinal data indicates that there has been a steady decline in attainment in numeracy over the length of the plan. In 2015, the school did not perform as well as similar schools in this area. The longitudinal year 5 NAPLAN data reveals that there has been a slight increase in mean scores achieved for reading, grammar and punctuation and spelling over the last four years. In 2012, the mean score for reading was 464 and by 2015, this had risen to 473. Spelling results improved by an average of 12 mean scale scores from 462 to 474 and grammar and punctuation improved by 22 mean scale scores from 462 to 474. Inconsistent results have been achieved in numeracy. Writing results for year 5 students have steadily declined over the last four years. In 2015, the school performed at least 25 mean scale scores lower than similar schools in all areas of NAPLAN testing.

When compared against school average growth data for students, further analysis reveals that from 2014-2015 the school added substantial and noteworthy value to student learning from years 3-5 in all areas of NAPLAN. Progress made by the school is significantly better than growth achieved by other schools in the ACT.

PIPS longitudinal data demonstrates that in 2012, just over 76% of students made expected or better than expected growth in reading and by 2015, this percentage had increased to over 95%. In 2012, almost 100% of students made expected or better than expected progress in numeracy but this had fallen to 83% by 2015. Further analysis shows that the percentage of students who had been identified as having one or more areas of disadvantage on entering school has risen from 8% to 34% which may explain the difference in results.

Stakeholder perception data indicates that both parents and staff at Bonython Primary School are highly satisfied with the school. Parent satisfaction has increased over the last four years by 10% and staff satisfaction has remained consistent with 100% of staff being highly satisfied with the school. The student perceptions of the school have declined and the school has recognised this and prioritised improvement strategies accordingly.

## **Evidence cited**

- School Satisfaction data
- School Summative Evaluation Report
- Longitudinal NAPLAN data
- Bonython Primary School Plan 2013-2016
- Annual Action Plans 2013-2016
- PIPS longitudinal data

## **Section C: School Improvement Planning and Implementation**

### **Priority Areas**

In 2013, the school identified three main areas for improvement:

- building teacher capacity and collaboration
- improving student outcomes
- strengthening the positive school culture for all members of the school community.

### **Achievements**

#### **Strategic Priority 1: Building teacher capacity and collaboration**

School improvement in this priority has been measured by the growth of teacher's wisdom/coaching level of the annual teacher confidence survey, the proportion of teachers implementing whole school practice as measured through coaching records and the proportion of teachers meeting their Professional Pathways goals. The school also used the annual Staff Satisfaction Survey to evaluate its success.

The school has identified coaching and mentoring as being one of the lynch-pins to build teacher capacity. There is also an individual agreement in place for the coaching and mentoring cycle as well as GROWth coaching conversations. Coaching includes the modelling of lessons, working shoulder to shoulder with beginning teachers and supporting teachers at a classroom level whilst mentoring involves working with groups of teachers in year group teams and supporting in classrooms. Individual goals and areas for improvement are identified through the Professional Pathways documents. Mid cycle and summative reflections are made by individual teachers. Each teacher self-selects one strand from Australian Institute of Teachers and School Leaders (AITSL) standards in pathways goals and then undertakes action research and learning. Executive teachers meet with teachers during the school day to discuss progress achieved against their identified goals.

A skills audit has been undertaken to illicit the capacity of teachers and this staff capacity matrix is a measure of confidence to deliver programs at a classroom level and beyond. According to the data, only a small number of the staff have the expertise or confidence to share their professional knowledge outside of the school. However, many are assured in using the school tools to assist colleagues in implementing school embedded programs.

Professional learning opportunities for staff are regularly provided through strong school links with the Lanyon Cluster of Schools and staff often visit each other's schools to share good practice.

## **Strategic Priority 2: Improving Student Outcomes**

The school identified building teacher capacity as an essential component in their journey to improve student outcomes. In 2014, the school executive developed a Response to Intervention model (RTI) to address the learning needs of a number of students who were not achieving. Formative and summative testing provided data sets which have been used to determine the level of intervention needed for groups and individual children. Executive staff discuss students at length with teachers before interventions are implemented. The school has strategically used its resources to ensure that students with additional needs have been supported by employing Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) and making use of expert teachers to implement intervention programs.

In 2013, Bonython Primary School became an early adopter of the BYOD initiative. Students are able to select the device best suited to their needs and these are used regularly in every classroom in the upper school. The school uses Google Apps for Education (GAFE) to enable students to receive live feedback and to self-assess their work and that of peers. Google Classrooms also enable parents to take an active part in their child's learning. Google Communities is used by many teachers to post learning activities on a regular basis to parents throughout the school. Visible learning is apparent in every classroom. Extensive use is made of learning technologies to explicitly teach skills. A substantial school investment has been made to ensure that every child has equal opportunity of access to ICT and to buy interactive whiteboards, Chromebooks and iPads where needed to enhance learning.

The school acknowledged through comprehensive analysis of longitudinal perception data that there was, and continues to be, a need to provide both voice and agency for students. This was highlighted by students at the school visit as an area for development. As a result of teacher/student consultation, Personalised Learning Time (PLT) was introduced in the upper school. This enables students to work towards building individual skills and developing expertise in literacy and numeracy. The school has also introduced a 'Genius' hour to give students agency in their learning.

Learning intentions and success criteria are firmly embedded across the school. Students also have individual learning intentions which are co-constructed by students and teachers. These are based on the First Steps continuum documents and the achievement standards from the Australian Curriculum. The targets for each child are revisited on a number of occasions before teachers are satisfied that identified areas in literacy and numeracy have been achieved. Formative assessment strategies are frequently used across the school to determine areas of strength and development needs.

## **Strategic Priority 3: Strengthen the positive culture for all members of the school community**

To enhance the already positive culture of the school community, a 'High Expectations' booklet has been developed to ensure that every member of the school community is aware of the high expectations set by the school at the beginning of the academic year. This guarantees consistency of practice and expectation across the school. Beginning teachers are provided with professional development about the culture and school policies and procedures and are well supported at a classroom level.

In response to teacher surveys undertaken in 2015 and the National Safe Schools Framework (NSSF), the school has explored a number of ways in which social and emotional learning for students can be further developed. Teachers are explicitly teaching social skills in their classes and the success of students is celebrated by the awarding of certificates of recognition. The

school has recognised that this is an area that is closely linked to student well being and will further develop strategies to strengthen their existing model.

Contemporary 21st Century learning spaces have been created externally to enhance the learning environment and engage students. A new outdoor quiet space and a reading area have recently been created to enable students to read in a comfortable space at break times. The playground has recently had additional play equipment added and parents have made significant contributions through fund raising to make sure that children attending Bonython have a vibrant learning environment.

The school canteen, which is run by the P&C, has recently had a major upgrade. The school food provided by the P&C follows ACT Canteen guidelines and the school has just implemented the ACT Government's Fresh Tastes initiative to encourage a healthy selection of school lunch items.

The school set out to enhance parental engagement and strengthen partnerships and parents are regular attenders at school functions, community breakfasts and assemblies. The principal and his staff believe that parents play an integral part in the education of their child. The introduction of learning intentions and personal learning targets for students has enabled parents to take an active part in their child's learning. The use of Google Communities has also empowered parents to discuss learning with their children without the need to be physically present at school. The school has also introduced numerous social media platforms as a means of celebrating achievement in school, in addition to using email to communicate on a regular basis to their school stakeholders.

A number of community partnerships have been formed with external agencies. Communities at Work operate an after school program to cater for working parents and a local playgroup makes use of a classroom during the week. In 2015, the school had the opportunity to participate in the Therapy ACT Therapy Assistance Program (TAP). This involved therapists visiting the school on a number of occasions to build the capacity of teachers in early intervention strategies and to work with families to provide support in learning at home. In 2015, the school also received an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's grant which enabled them to strategically employ an additional teacher whose role was to develop a system to track literacy and numeracy outcomes for these students, and to provide additional resources for families to support literacy and numeracy at home. Additional resources were also purchased to assist in engaging students in their learning. The school was also supported by the ACT Directorate Tuggeranong Network Student Engagement Team.

### **Evidence cited**

- Staff induction procedures
- Annual Action Plans 2013-2016
- High Expectations booklet
- GAFE examples
- Google Forms School meetings with parent community
- RTI model
- Teacher's plans and timetables
- Examples of learning intentions
- Teachers Professional Pathways documents

- Coaching and Mentoring Schedule
- GROWth proformas
- School Newsletters
- School Website

## **Reflections**

The Bonython Primary School priorities have remained constant over the life of the School Plan. There has however been a significant change in the leadership of the school over the course of the last four years and there have been four principals in this time. There has also been a substantial turnover in teaching staff. This change has resulted in a noteworthy loss of corporate knowledge about intent of the original plan. It has been a challenge for the leadership team to reflect on work completed by previous executive and they should be congratulated on writing a comprehensive Summative Evaluation Report given these constraints. Targets that have been set at the beginning of each year in the AAP to measure improvement over time have not been updated to reflect continuous improvement and therefore these have neither been aspirational nor used to reflect the starting point for learning as a benchmark.

Achievement of an identified AITSL standard is one component of how areas of focus are identified in supervisor and mentor conversations. From a beginning teacher perspective it may be advantageous to identify a standard rather than a strand to provide evidence of accomplishment. Written feedback is not currently provided to every teacher about progress made against individual goals.

Teachers at Bonython share practice and collaborate on a regular basis often sharing groups of students and team teaching. Collaborative practice is also evident in teacher planning and this is an embedded practice across the school. The principal has strategically used resources to create a number of contemporary learning spaces to allow for student collaboration and team work.

The school has also strengthened inquiry learning by using the work of Kath Murdoch. This has proved to be a major step in engaging students of all abilities. The model is strongly supported by parents as evidenced in parent meetings on the panel's school visit.

## Section D: National Tools Self-Evaluation Results

### National School Improvement Tool

A School Review Committee had oversight of the NSIT self evaluation undertaken by all teachers and admin staff in 2016. Staff meeting time was devoted to robust discussion in determining evidence for each of the domains. Domains 1 to 4 and Domains 5 to 9 were looked at by separate groups and then reviewed by each other. Final analysis and rating decisions were decided on by the School Review Committee who then provided the School Board and P&C with a copy of the matrix and evidence to be able to gain their feedback. A draft school summative report was also shared with the board and staff to collect feedback before its completion.

At Bonython Primary School the combined time reviewers spent across the two days, in conversations with the principal, leaders, teachers, LSAs, students, parents and board members was approximately 22 hours. Another six and a half hours was spent on reviewer moderation, writing and preparation for presentations to leaders and staff.

While the review team had substantial, quality, evidence (through reading, questioning and observing) to be confident of the accuracy of their findings we believe that more time would have allowed us to have a greater insight into the operations of the Learning Support Unit – Autism specific and pre-school.

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

- *The school has developed an agenda for improvement in partnership and school leaders can describe the improvements they wish to see in student behaviours and outcomes. This agenda is communicated in staff meetings, school newsletters and on the school website using a variety of formats to suit local needs.*
- *The leadership team has analysed school performance data over a number of years and is aware of trends in student achievement levels. Targets for improvement are clear and accompanied by timelines.*
- *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.*
- *There is evidence of a school-wide commitment to every student's success.*
- *The principal and other school leaders articulate a shared commitment to improvement, but limited attention has been given to specifying detail or to developing a school-wide approach (e.g. plans for improvement. Targets for improvement are not specific (e.g. not accompanied by timelines).*
- *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.*

The principal was able to clearly articulate his personal vision for the school. This vision was articulated by leaders and teachers and highly evident in behaviour and practice.

High priority is given to the use of five formative assessment strategies to maximise learning. The main features the review team observed throughout the whole school to demonstrate this were students referencing learning intentions and success criteria. They used these to talk about their learning and the range of strategies being used to check for understanding to move learning forward.

The review team have confidence that, because of the directions already taken and the highly reflective culture at Bonython, the next school improvement agenda will be well considered, targeted, consulted widely upon and will build on what the school has already achieved.

Over the life of the plan key priority areas have been in line with ACT Directorate's vision, accountability and development documents.

The school has identified that they need to make significant use of a number of longitudinal data sets to further inform school practices and procedures.

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.*
- *One or more members of staff have been assigned responsibility for implementing the annual plan. The school has ensured that appropriate software is available.*
- *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. These discussions occur at whole-school and team levels. The school can illustrate through project plans how data have been used to identify priorities, take action and monitor progress.*
- *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.*
- *There is limited engagement with parents and families around school data.*

Formative assessment strategies are directly linked to the school's AAP targets and benchmarks. A clear procedure to collect data on how embedded the use of these strategies are has been established to inform future decisions. There was strong documented and observational evidence of this effective use of data. 'Walk throughs' by teachers and leaders is the vehicle used to gather quantitative data about instructional practice. Point in time data is collected on mobile technology using Google Forms on identified 'look fors' and this information is collated in real time for future analysis.

Rich tasks are the preferred method of extension.

Evidence shows that there is clear triangulation of data to inform intervention for students.

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

- *High levels of trust are apparent across the school community. There is a strong sense of belonging and pride in the school.*
- *The 'tone' of the school reflects a school-wide commitment to purposeful, successful learning. There are very few obvious behavioural, attendance or engagement problems.*
- *There is a strong focus on quality learning and on the creation of a culture in which all students are expected to learn successfully, in their own ways.*

- *Individual talents are valued. Class 'busy work' is kept to a minimum, and an attempt is made to ensure that all students are engaged in challenging, meaningful learning.*
- *Respectful and caring relationships are reflected in the ways in which staff, students and parents interact and in the language they use.*
- *Parents and families are encouraged to take a genuine and close interest in the work of the school and are welcomed as partners in their children's learning. There are agreed guidelines on such matters as greeting visitors, taking messages, and responding to queries promptly and respectfully.*
- Staff morale is generally high.
- The school effectively implements its policies, for example, by ensuring that disruptive behaviour, bullying and harassment are dealt with promptly.

Documentation of Bonython's RTI and case management processes and procedures was explicit, it was shared widely. Professional support staff have shared learning with staff to support the early identification of students at risk.

Evidence supports the Staff Satisfaction Survey data which demonstrates high levels of mutual trust and strong relationships are a feature within and across teaching teams.

The articulation of expected behaviours and procedures that display high expectations and intellectual rigour at Bonython were created and shared at the beginning of 2016. They are evident across the school as well as referenced to reviewers by new teachers.

Gains made by students involved in Reading Recovery programs have been sustained. The Reading Recovery teacher supported students 'coming off' program and monitored their reading levels in following years. Reading data informs learning and school decision making.

Student comments reflected the accuracy of Satisfaction Survey data. Students were able to clearly articulate that they would like a greater voice in learning and decision making. The review team believe that the planned Change2 process to develop a collaborative approach and commitment to future initiatives should be beneficial.

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

- *A school-wide process has been established for identifying specific student learning needs. This process includes systematic testing to establish learning gaps and special needs. School records of individual student needs, achievements and progress are maintained centrally and shared across year levels.*
- *The principal and other school leaders have introduced programs and strategies to identify and address the needs of students in the school and are sourcing and applying available resources to meet those needs.*
- *The school has developed processes (e.g. systematic testing and assessment) for identifying student learning needs, although there may not always be good school records of student achievement and progress.*
- *Programs to meet individual learning needs (e.g. programs for gifted students, students with learning difficulties, students for whom English is a second language, Indigenous students, refugees) are prioritised, where possible, in the school budget.*

- *Physical spaces and technology are used effectively to maximise student learning. Learning spaces are organised for whole group work, small group work and individual work.*

LSAs are deployed effectively, working with individuals and small groups within their learning areas. Identification procedures for intervention support are widely known about.

Individual Learning Plans exist for identified students, both funded and non-funded.

There is systematic coordination of learning support interventions, based on the analysis of appropriate data, provision of teacher feedback and a flexible targeted approach.

Open plan rooms support teacher collaboration and expectations are made clear about how this looks in all classrooms. Learning spaces, including wet areas and withdrawal areas, are used in flexible ways in response to need. The use of technology as a tool for learning is highly evident.

A strategic decision was taken for class sizes in 2016 to be kept small to enable teachers to work more individually with students while they develop their own instructional practice skills aligned to 2016 AAP priorities.

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 and coaching. Teachers visit each other's classrooms and welcome opportunities to have principals and other school leaders observe and discuss their work with them.*
- *Attention is paid to strengths and weaknesses in the school-wide team, to train staff to address particular needs, and to support staff.*
- *The school provides opportunities for teachers to take on leadership roles outside the classroom.*
- *Teachers are open to constructive feedback.*
- *The school is implementing a formal process for conducting professional discussions with staff.*

Action research learning presentations are of a high standard and they are carefully linked to school AAP strategies, including Professional Pathway goals. Expectations and protocols for 'walk throughs' are explicit. Demonstration of these in action confirms that espoused practice and lived practice is aligned and closely linked.

The principal is the lead learner at Bonython. The principal and other school leaders lead and model professional learning in the school.

Leadership opportunities are distributed with teachers frequently being able to contribute to whole school leadership.

The school currently uses the 'GROWth' model to coach teachers at the beginning of the academic year.

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

- *The school curriculum delivery (including the time allocated to particular learning) balance requirements to address all learning areas, to give priority to English, mathematics and to embed the fundamental skills of literacy and numeracy.*
- *The school leadership team ensures that the enacted curriculum remains a focus for discussion among, and collaboration between, teachers.*
- *Curriculum delivery is designed to meet the needs of the range of students within each year level as well as those with disabilities and other particular needs.*
- *The school has a documented 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.*

Success criteria were evident and a feature of planning, assessment and practice across the school. Students knew how to improve and teachers knew what the next teaching point needed to be.

There was evidence from some year level teams of a strong connection between Australian Curriculum standards and learning intentions in reading, writing and mathematics. Phrasing learning intentions as questions has been identified as a way of developing more concept based statements. The review team observed that there was variability in the quality of learning intentions across the school.

The development of quality inquiry units as a means of providing students with a voice in their learning has been identified as an area for development. Likewise, the mapping of current school curriculum to ensure vertical alignment of skills, concepts and knowledge articulated in the Australian Curriculum constitutes ongoing work for the school.

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

- *It is recognised throughout the school that some students require significant adjustments to their learning programs.*
- *School leaders explicitly encourage teachers to tailor their teaching to student needs and readiness. This includes the systematic use of assessment instruments (standardised assessment tasks and teacher developed assessment tools) to establish where individuals are in their learning and to identify skill gaps and misunderstandings. Teachers cater for individual differences by offering multiple means of representation, engagement and expression.*
- *Planning shows how the different needs of students are addressed, and how multiple opportunities to learn are provided.*
- *Reports to parents include suggestions for ways in which parents can support their children's learning.*
- *Some use is made of assessment instruments to identify individual strengths and weaknesses and starting points for teaching.*

Parents and students both commented that they value the Genius Program. Attention may be paid by the school to ensure expectations are high, and implementation consistent, across teams.

Examples of planning for task differentiation, to take account of individual readiness, were shared with the review team.

Relevant data sets and learning intentions are used by the Intervention Team to create Individual Learning Plans, shared with families and teachers and reflected on regularly. LSAs have good knowledge of identified strategies and learning goals for students.

The review team found minimal evidence in student work books of written feedback.

The panel noted the following regarding the domain **Effective Pedagogical Practices**.

- *The principal and other school leaders have accepted personal responsibility for driving improvements in teaching throughout the school. They demonstrate a strong conviction that improved teaching is the key to improved student learning and have clear and well-known positions on the kinds of teaching that they wish to see occurring.*
- *School leaders are committed to continuous improvement in teaching practices throughout the school.*
- *There is a particular focus on improved teaching methods in reading, writing, mathematics and professional learning activities are focused on building teachers' understandings.*
- *Clarity about what students are expected to learn and be able to do, high expectations of every student's learning, explicit teaching of skills and content, individualised attention as required, and timely feedback to guide student action are key elements of the school's push for improved teaching and learning.*

The work of Dylan Williams is used by the school to further support its priority around personalised learning. Conferencing and the use of formative assessment tools were observed being used effectively across the school to check that learning is occurring for all students and identified groups of students.

Parents commented that there was variability in the time frames taken to communicate learning goals. Their knowledge about how, when and why new student learning intentions are established was limited.

Students routinely knew what the purpose of their learning was, and often commented on how they might apply that learning.

The review team saw strong use of success criteria and teachers could demonstrate in their planning how students progressed. This was individualised and based on readiness.

There are some pockets of excellent practice in the school where learning is strongly related to concepts and big ideas to be developed over time to promote deep learning.

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.*
- *The school has external 'partnerships', but rather than being built around a coherent, jointly planned program of activities to improve outcomes for students, these 'partnerships' tend to be mutually convenient arrangements (e.g. exchanges of expertise or the sharing of facilities between institutions or organisations).*
- *The student needs that partnerships are designed to address may not be made explicit and, rather than being carefully planned, individual partnerships tend to be opportunistic in nature.*
- *No plans exist to systematically review the effectiveness of partnerships, which typically are very dependent on the efforts of a small number of individuals and so have limited sustainability.*

Bonython Primary school actively tries to engage parents and families as partners to support learning and wellbeing in a range of ways. An up-to-date school website, newsletters, Facebook page (which is accessed regularly), school assemblies and School App notices keeps parents informed about curriculum and opportunities for engagement.

Parents expressed great confidence in the principal, his direction and approachability. They suggested ways in which the school may be able to develop partnerships that further promote the arts and sports opportunities for students.

The school has self-identified through their NSSF areas to address in relation to parental engagement.

The P&C have provided funding which has enhanced the school grounds and learning environments.

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

A majority approach was used to compile National Safe School Framework Audit Tool survey response from teachers and admin staff in 2016.

School leaders reviewed the evidence collected and produced a consensus view which was shared more widely and with the school board.

Survey results indicated that out of nine elements action was recommended for the following five.

### *Element 1: Leadership commitment to safe school*

Facilitation of access to resources to support the implementation of the school vision and the establishment of a shared common language to be used consistently by everyone.

### *Element 3: Policies and Procedures*

Developing, frequently reviewing and communicating policies and procedures to ensure confidence and consistency in use.

### *Element 4: Professional learning*

Exploring targeted opportunities to support students social and emotional well being that includes professional development opportunities for non-teaching and casual staff

### *Element 5: Engagement and skill development in safe school curriculum*

Conducting a school wide audit of social and emotional needs across the school.

### *Element 9: Partnerships with communities and families.*

Identification of partnership opportunities that enrich the school's vision to be a safe and supportive school.

The panel found high levels of correlation between the data gained from this instrument and other evidence presented to the review team including the NSIT.

## Section E: Commendations and Recommendations

### Commendations

Bonython Primary School is commended for the following.

1. The development of its RTI model for learning and wellbeing support. This inclusive model provides opportunities for teachers to explore how individual needs can be met on a whole of school level. Use of both summative and formative assessment data sets to target interventions is a feature of the model.
2. The approach taken to action learning to build teacher capacity. This is aligned to school priorities and outcomes are systematically shared across teams and with the local cluster of schools. The review team can affirm the schools intention to consider how they might upscale some of the key successes as whole school practices.
3. The high levels of professional trust and openness that exist between teachers in teams, across teams, with and between leaders. This mutual trust provides the strong foundation on which personalised professional learning is based.
4. The success that Bonython has had in building a positive culture that promotes high expectations of learning and behaviour in the school. This has been achieved through their focus on formative assessment and the development of quality teacher-student relationships. Teachers have an excellent knowledge of students learning strengths, as well as their individual social and emotional needs.
5. The early adoption of a school BYOD policy for students in years 3-6. This increased access by students to technology as a tool for learning, along with school expertise and the expanding use of GAFE has contributed to the success of Bonython's personalised approach. The use of technology at the school has also enabled parents to connect more strongly to their child's learning; to know about what is happening and be able to enrich learning at home. Access for planning and collaboration between teachers using ICT is to be commended.

## **Recommendations**

In the development of the next narrow and sharp school improvement agenda, the panel recommends Bonython Primary School pays attention to the following opportunities for improvement:

1. Find ways for students to:
  - actively contribute to learning plans in partnership with teachers
  - be involved in whole school decision making
  - build their leadership potential
  - have an authentic voice.
2. Map the current school curriculum and develop a plan to ensure its vertical alignment, paying particular attention to the Australian curriculum general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities. Ensure that all curriculum documents in learning areas are fully aligned with this articulated curriculum, and that the documented curriculum is being enacted across the school.
3. Improve the data literacy skills of leaders and teachers by providing formal training and expert support, to rigorously action and track progress against the schools identified school wide, clear and measurable targets. Support teachers to interpret and use a wide range of student performance data to differentiate the learning for students and measure student success from preschool to year 6.
4. Continue to embed the personalised learning approach for teachers and students at Bonython Primary School. As a component of this approach, Ensure that a characteristic of every teacher's classroom practice is the consistent documentation of adjustment's made in planning based on student assessment, to determine the strengths and weaknesses of individual students as starting points for teaching.
5. Create a school Professional Learning Plan based on the rigorous use of the AITSL standards. Monitor the quality of learning by using the Classroom Practice Continuum, to identify the individual and collective capacity of teachers. Build upon the well-established professional learning culture, including coaching and mentoring programs, in the school linking professional learning goals to the professional learning plan. Use a formal coaching program to build the capacity of teachers and provide school leaders and others with the skills to effectively coach for improvement.
6. Seek ways to become more strategic in forming partnerships with families and the wider community utilising these partnerships to source resources to address identified student learning and wellbeing needs.

## Section F: Record of School Review Process

The following people were members of the external School Review Panel for Bonython Primary School conducted on 17-18 August 2016.

<b>Name:</b> Dianne Pekin	<b>ACER:</b> Lead Reviewer
<b>Name:</b> Linda Baird	<b>School:</b> Principal, Gold Creek 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 Bonython Primary School I accept the External Review Report on behalf of the school community.

<b>Name:</b> Greg Terrell	
<b>Signature:</b> 	<b>Date:</b> 21 / 09 / 2016