



ACT
Government
Education

NGUNNAWAL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Review Report 2017

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Introduction: Overview of the External School Review process

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

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

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

Section A: School context

Ngunnawal Primary School currently has an enrolment of 720 students from preschool to year 6. The school community is diverse, with 32 percent of students at the school having a language background other than English and 7 percent of students identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (ATSI). Currently the school has six mainstream preschool classes and offers an early intervention Koori preschool program for ATSI students.

In 2017, there are five kindergarten classes, ten year 1/2 classes, seven year 3/4 classes and six year 5/6 classes. There are 44 teaching staff and 14 non-teaching staff filling full-time and part-time positions at the school.

Staff collaborate as a professional learning community, in which the focus is on learning for all children. Ngunnawal Primary School operates a Learning Support Centre that follows an integration model to support students. In addition to this, three specialist English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) teachers support students across the school who are English language learners. Ngunnawal Primary School is inclusive of all students and ensures that those with additional needs have targeted Individual Learning Plans, Personalised Learning Plans and Mainstream Personalised Learning Plans.

There has been significant staff and leadership change in recent years, which has created challenges in continuity while also providing opportunities through the introduction of new ideas and experience. The teacher head count has grown from 34 in 2013 to 44 in 2016. The non-teaching staff numbers have remained the same.

Section B: School performance

The school has examined longitudinal system data from the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) and Performance Indicators in Primary Schools (PIPS), school-based data from PM (Progress with Meaning) Benchmarks, and stakeholder perception data (school satisfaction survey).

NAPLAN (National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy)

The strategic plan spanned the period 2013 to 2016. During this time, NAPLAN mean scores varied in comparison to ACT averages in all domains.

The school was below the ACT mean score in reading for both year 3 and year 5 in all years of the plan. In writing, the school was at or above the ACT mean score in year 3 in 2013 and 2016 and below in 2014 and 2015. Year 5 students were close to the ACT mean score in 2013 and consistently around 20 points below in subsequent years.

Spelling mean scores at Ngunnawal Primary School were above the ACT mean in 2013 for both year 3 and 5 but below the ACT mean from 2014 to 2016. In grammar and punctuation, apart from year 3 in 2013, the school was consistently well below the ACT mean score for both year 3 and year 5.

Ngunnawal Primary School was consistently below the average ACT scaled score for both year 3 and year 5 in numeracy.

In comparison to like-schools, Ngunnawal Primary School's relative NAPLAN performance has slipped over time. In 2013, Ngunnawal's average scores were similar to like-schools' scores in reading, writing, spelling, and numeracy at years 3 and 5, and spelling and punctuation at year 3. In 2016, Ngunnawal's scores are slightly below like-schools' in year 3 grammar and punctuation and numeracy; slightly below like-schools' in year 5 reading and writing; and significantly below like-schools' in year 5 spelling, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy.

There has been significant change in the school over the life of the plan and the school leadership is confident that as staffing stabilises and key strategies are embedded, results will improve.

PIPS (Performance Indicators in Primary Schools)

The kindergarten students on entry consistently have lower raw scores than the ACT average. In reading in 2013 and 2014, the cohorts achieved more growth than the ACT average, and in 2015 and 2016, less. In numeracy, the cohorts achieved less growth than the ACT average in 2013, 2015 and 2016.

Stakeholder perception data

The school satisfaction data is fairly close to the ACT mean over the four years in most areas. In 2016, the only area shared by students, parents and staff that was well below the ACT mean was 'student behaviour is well managed at this school'. In 2013, parents rated the

school 6% above the ACT average. This declined to 11% below in 2016. Students rated the school 13% above the ACT average in 2013. In 2016 this declined to 19% below.

In 2016, the positive response rate for three questions for staff declined from previous years. They were:

- the school takes staff opinions seriously
- I receive useful feedback about my work
- staff are well supported at this school.

In 2016, there was a decline in student perceptions, especially regarding the school being well maintained and the school taking students' opinions seriously.

Parents in 2016 continued to rate as low the item 'this school looks for ways to improve'.

The school leadership team believes that improved communication and a focus on the Friendly Schools program will enhance school perception.

Attendance

According to the My school website the attendance rate for all students at Ngunnawal Primary School in 2016 was 92%. The percentage of all students attending more than 90% of the time in 2016 was 75%. Within this average it was noted that 77% non-Indigenous and 54% Indigenous students attend more than 90% of the time.

Evidence cited

- summative reports and school board reports
- SMART data
- the MySchool website
- PIPS and NAPLAN data.

Section C: School improvement planning and implementation

Priority areas

The Strategic Plan (2013–16) outlined four strategic priorities:

- to improve student outcomes in literacy and numeracy
- to improve the capacity of teachers through instructional leadership
- to increase student leadership opportunities and develop citizenship at the school
- to build upon and strengthen partnerships in our community.

Improvement strategies under the strategic priorities have remained relatively consistent over the life of the plan.

Performance measures were identified in the strategic plan and these were used to inform the development of targets in the 2013 Annual Operating Plan. The targets and performance measures were not necessarily aligned as the new ACT Education Directorate targets were added to those used for school-based planning. From 2013 to 2016 the targets changed, with some correlation from one year to the next. For the purpose of this report, the focus is on 2015 and 2016, when the targets are more consistent. Notwithstanding the school improvement work undertaken in 2013 and 2014.

Strategic Priority 1: To improve student outcomes in literacy and numeracy

Targets

The ACT Education Directorate sets targets based on NAPLAN school mean scores in reading and numeracy for year 3 and year 5. In 2013, Ngunnawal Primary School met all Directorate targets. In 2014, no Directorate targets were met. In 2015, all targets were met. In 2016, reading and numeracy targets were met for year 3 but not for year 5.

The school also sets its own targets in reading, writing, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy. In 2015, school-based targets were met in reading, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy (but not writing) for year 3; and in reading, writing, and numeracy (but not grammar and punctuation) for year 5. In 2016, school-based targets were met in writing, grammar and punctuation, and numeracy (but not reading) for year 3; and in reading, writing, and grammar and punctuation (but not numeracy) for year 5.

Achievements

In aiming to improve student outcomes in literacy and numeracy, the school implemented the following strategies:

- A professional learning community structure provides teachers with additional time to plan collaboratively.

- SMART (strategic, measurable, attainable, results-oriented, and time-bound) goals are used to gather information about the literacy and numeracy needs of students and to develop an impact cycle for targeted teaching.
- A literacy and numeracy field officer was appointed for the 2013-2016 period.
- Staff undertook professional learning in: Understanding by Design Planning Framework; SMART goals; Middle Years Mental Computation; Count Me in Too; First Steps Second Edition Reading and Spelling; The Big 6, Functional Grammar, Writing and Running Records.
- Staff used the Australian Curriculum to develop a scope and sequence and 'I Can' statements for the curriculum areas.
- The school ran numeracy, parent education and other workshops over the life of the plan.
- The Therapy Assistance Program and a Holiday Reading Program have been established.
- A data wall is used to reflect student progress using school-set reading benchmarks.
- Consistent methods are used to collect data, with common assessment data tools including Spelling, SENA (Schedule for Early Number Assessment), PM (Progress with Meaning) Reading Benchmark and Middle Years Mental Computation.
- The school facilitates a homework club.

Reflections

The school reported significant change in personnel, curriculum, teaching strategies and classroom organisation over the period of the plan. The ambitious improvement agenda is starting to take hold but is still a work in progress. The school leadership team is confident that as changes are embedded in school practice student results will improve.

Strategic Priority 2: Improve the capacity of teachers through instructional leadership

Targets

The school met its targets for 'building skills capacity', but peer observation and feedback was not as widely implemented as expected.

Achievements

The following achievements were cited by the school in this area:

- Clear protocols for teacher observation and feedback were developed.
- Learning walks at Ngunnawal and surrounding schools were conducted.
- The literacy and numeracy field officer and the numeracy coordinator coached staff in their respective fields.

- The school participated in the Principals as Literacy Leaders program with a direct impact on the school's approach to reading.
- Time was allocated to staff for collaborative planning and PLC time.

Reflections

The school leadership team recognises that while significant progress has been made to develop a professional learning community, the team will need to continue to embed aspects of this strategic priority, such as peer observations and differentiated professional learning, to build an expert teaching staff.

Strategic Priority 3: Increase student leadership opportunities and active citizenship at the school

Targets

The school has created a student leadership team that is now actively engaged in school activities and meeting regularly to discuss issues.

Achievements

The following achievements were cited by the school in this area:

- The school captains and school vice captains worked in collaboration with a school leader to create a cohesive student council to support active citizenship across the school.
- As part of the student council, four committees were created to work on different aspects of student leadership.
- In 2016, the student leadership program at Ngunnawal Primary School intensified. School captains and school vice captains had increased responsibilities and opportunities to add to their leadership portfolio.
- The school captains have provided an end of year address to the school board since 2015.

Reflections

The school is proud of its work in student leadership and understands the challenge is sustaining enthusiasm from staff and students until it becomes an embedded practice in the school.

Strategic Priority 4: Build upon and strengthen partnerships in our community

Targets

Partnerships with community were strengthened over the period from 2013 to 2016, and records indicate that the school met its targets in this area consistently.

Achievements

The following achievements were cited by the school in this area:

- Ngunnawal Primary School led a cluster project to create a website to provide accessible, local and relevant resources for teachers to use in the classroom. The Gungahlin Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education website was launched 16 September 2015.
- To further build home-school partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait families, the Indigenous education officer made regular contact with these families throughout.
- A homework club continued to run each week to engage students in a variety of learning areas. During 2016, 33 Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander students from years 1 to 6 were invited to attend. Seventy-nine percent of students accepted the invitation, 91 percent of whom attended regularly.
- The Gungahlin Child and Family Centre worked collaboratively with the school on the Gungahlin Libraries Digital Stories project and in the Homework Centre.
- By 2016, Ngunnawal Primary School introduced a number of projects to better engage the most vulnerable students. Some of these included the Didgeridoo program, the student leadership program, the girls' weaving group and the mural project.
- The Salvation Army and chaplain delivered the Red Cap program during this period and have recently provided 1:1 mentoring to students.
- The Smith Family continues to provide students with Learning for Life scholarships and the Rock and Water program.

Reflections

There have been many initiatives introduced over the life of the plan and evidence suggests that the school has strengthened its community partnerships. The school is examining how increased use of technology and/or social media can be used to grow relationships.

Evidence cited

- NAPLAN data
- annual school board report
- PIPS data

- discussions with staff and community
- the school website.

Section D: National tools self-evaluation results

National School Improvement Tool (NSIT)

DOMAIN 1: An explicit improvement agenda

- *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, international experience and from other schools that have achieved significant improvements.*
- *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 may lack coherence, be short term or without a whole-school focus).*
- *Plans for improvement do not appear to have been clearly communicated or widely implemented. 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.*

Comments and findings

- The school has a strategic plan, developed by its leadership team, in conjunction with the school board.
- Annual operating/action plans have been developed each year to operationalise the strategic improvement agenda. The focus of key improvement strategies has shifted during the life of the current strategic plan. This has been evident within new ways of working that have been introduced consequent to changes in school leadership and its broader workforce composition during the past four years.
- The leadership team has learnt from research evidence to support actions towards improving literacy. Some key strategies require analysis, synthesis and contextualising of the research to support change management.
- Parents reported that school data and planning strategies were presented at Parents and Citizens Association and board meetings, and in newsletters. The penetration of this communication was limited due to lack of parent engagement in conversations to build partnerships and inform strategic directions.

DOMAIN 2: Analysis and discussion of data

- *There is a documented school plan and timetable for the annual collection of data on student achievement.*
- *One or more members of staff have been assigned responsibility for implementing the annual plan, analysing the full range of school data, and summarising, displaying and communicating student outcome data for the school.*
- *Time is set aside (e.g. on 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.*
- *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.*
- *An ad hoc approach exists to building staff skills in the analysis, interpretation and use of classroom data.*
- *Information about the school's performance is communicated to the school community, but may lack explanation or analysis. There is limited engagement with parents and families around school data.*

Comments and findings

- The school leadership team pays attention to system data and has set plans and structures in place to capture data sets for aspects of literacy and numeracy. A data wall, tracking reading progress, is updated each term.
- Team planning documents reflect a focus on setting goals for groups of students that are strategic, measurable, attainable, results oriented, and time bound (SMART). Specialist English as an Additional Language or Dialect teachers plan for and document SMART goals for individual learners.
- The leadership team described how engagement in the Principals as Literacy Leaders program has supported the school's data-informed practice. In particular, disciplined dialogue protocols have supported data analysis and planning.
- Staff meeting minutes reflect whole-school level discussion of data.

DOMAIN 3: A culture that promotes learning

- *There is a focus on quality learning and on the creation of a culture in which all students are expected to learn successfully.*
- *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, by ensuring that disruptive behaviour, bullying and harassment are dealt with. The school has clear expectations for how students should behave and interact with one another, and in the main, relationships are caring and respectful. Some staff time is taken up dealing with behaviour problems.*
- *Most parents take an obvious interest in their children's learning. Engagement is primarily through regularly scheduled parent-teacher interviews.*
- *Staff morale is satisfactory.*

Comments and findings

- Parents have reported an interest in improving the quality, quantity and timeliness of feedback they receive regarding specific events as well as general behaviour and the school's strategies. They also described their interest in timely and appropriate notification of matters that may affect their children.
- Teachers participate in collaborative team planning meetings, where an emerging Response to Intervention model is supporting them to explore evidence of student learning, set goals, expand repertoires of practice, and share responsibility for student learning outcomes across their respective year levels.
- Students described how class agreements are used to support a positive classroom climate. The panel observed explicit modelling of the school's values and explicit communication of learning intentions and success criteria in classrooms and in documentation supporting student leadership initiatives.
- The National Safe Schools audit reflects a high use of relational teaching strategies, and the panel observed cooperative learning experiences were features of classroom practice. Student leaders described Friendly Schools concepts.
- Interviews with staff and the National Safe Schools audit presented staff wellbeing as an area for exploration. They are generally positive about the supportive relationships they share, although there is evidence of a communication gap between teams across the school, including the administrative team.

DOMAIN 4: Targeted use of school resources

- *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 learning spaces are used creatively and technology is accessible to the majority of staff and students.*

Comments and findings

- The school leadership team has prioritised resourcing to support students with English as an Additional Language or Dialect and/or Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander backgrounds. This includes the appointment of a literacy and numeracy field officer and an Indigenous education officer.
- Staff described how the development of Personalised Learning Plans is informed by the special needs team and specialist staff. Interviews and classroom observations evidenced that these plans support flexible curriculum delivery arrangements to address the needs of individual learners.
- EAL/D support is provided predominantly through a withdrawal model. There has been a recent shift to enable classroom teachers to provide targeted group support and curricular adjustments whilst specialists work with larger class groups.
- Data walls and the school's assessment planner highlight the expectation that teachers use common assessment tools and develop common assessment items to inform their literacy and numeracy practice.
- There has been an investment in professional learning in SMART goal setting, Count Me in Too, Middle Years Mental Computation, and a range of literacy strategies.
- Interviews with the leadership team suggest that Friendly Schools resources support mapping and targeting needs in the area of social and emotional competencies.

DOMAIN 5: An expert teaching team

- *There is evidence that the principal and other school leaders see the development of staff into an expert and coherent school-wide teaching team as central to improving outcomes for all students.*
- *There is a documented professional learning plan and 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, 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.*

- *Where it is necessary to manage unsatisfactory staff performance, this is done professionally and effectively, and in accordance with agreed guidelines.*

Comments and findings

- Staff describe how coaching and peer observation processes have been introduced across the school. This has grown from a strategy used predominantly to support new staff to an opportunity for the development of staff at all career stages. Learning walks occur across the school, and this process is supported by feedback protocols to focus professional dialogue and learning.
- Three English as an Additional Language or Dialect specialists support the implementation of programs to meet the needs of the community.
- The school's workforce profile reflects strategic recruitment to balance strengths in the leadership team. This is evident in the appointment of staff who bring specialisations and expertise in early childhood education, data analysis and enhancing learning through information and communication technology.
- Examples of work in supporting the development of staff across a diverse range of needs are evident.

DOMAIN 6: Systematic curriculum delivery

- *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.*
- *School leaders talk about embedding fundamental cross-curricular skills such as literacy, numeracy and higher order thinking within all subjects, but there is little evidence that school-wide strategies are in place to drive a consistent approach. Literacy tends to be seen as the responsibility of English teachers, and numeracy as the responsibility of mathematics teachers.*
- *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

- Staff engage with the Australian Curriculum for planning, and describe its relationship to school-based documents for science, English, history, civics and citizenship, and mathematics. These translate to long- term team planners.
- Collaborative team planning has been introduced to support accountability and alignment of planning, teaching and assessment across the year levels. There has been an investment in building teacher knowledge and skill sets to design learning

experiences using the Understanding by Design Framework. The leadership team note that, while it is taking time for staff to build the understanding required to use this approach to ensure interdisciplinary connections and cross-curricular capabilities are embedded, the approach is having a positive impact on consistency.

DOMAIN 7: Differentiated teaching and learning

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

Comments and findings

- Teachers develop Personalised Learning Plans to support the needs of identified students. These identify strategies and adjustments.
- The Response to Intervention approach is a feature of collaborative team planning meetings. SMART goal setting enables teachers to identify and plan for levels of broad and targeted intervention.
- Students in kindergarten to year 6 classes have access to flexible grouping structures that provide differentiated support, identified through testing processes.
- Conversations with the Indigenous education officer reflect a range of structures and experiences that are promoting cultural integrity and supporting the engagement of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander students and community.
- Teachers are experimenting with the process of inquiry to support differentiation across the curriculum.
- Students share evidence of personalised goal setting in the areas of social and literacy learning.
- Student reports reflect progress and strategies to support their personal improvement.

DOMAIN 8: Effective pedagogical practices

- *School leaders are committed to continuous improvement in teaching practices throughout the school and expect team leaders and teachers to identify ways of doing this, 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.*
- *There is a particular focus on improved teaching methods in reading and writing, and professional learning activities are focused on building teachers' understandings of highly effective teaching strategies in these areas.*
- *There is some clarity about what students are expected to learn, but a lack of balance in teaching methods.*

Comments and findings

- Staff conversations reflect that inquiry-based learning has been identified as the school's preferred pedagogical approach. Some teachers are able to share how this translates into their classrooms. The leadership team recognises this as an area requiring development.
- 'I Can' statements have been developed by staff for English and mathematics for all year levels. These statements describe understandings and skills that the school considers 'essential to know', 'important to know' and 'nice to know'. They inform the learning intentions that are made explicit to students in classroom program delivery.
- Recognition of and responsiveness to the needs of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander students is evident in discussions with staff and the school's Indigenous education officer. Cultural identity, the 8 Ways of Learning framework and strong relational approaches are features of the school's homework club that supports Aboriginal students from years 1 to 6.
- Induction programs focus on the operational aspects of the school.

DOMAIN 9: School-community partnerships

- *The school has established one or more partnerships with families, local businesses and/or community organisations with the express purpose of improving outcomes for students. 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. All partners have a high level of understanding of, and commitment to, the purposes of the partnership and clear objectives have been set, expressed in terms of improved outcomes for students.*

- *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. However, there may be limited evidence of improved student outcomes as a result of partnership activities – possibly because there has been insufficient time for them to demonstrate an effect.*

Comments and findings

- Staff across the school describe engagement in cluster and community projects during the life of the current strategic plan. These include a website project with the Gungahlin Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education group, and the Gungahlin Child and Family Centre's Libraries project.
- The school has initiated support for families experiencing need through the Salvation Army, the Smith Family, and the Belconnen Community Centre. While the positive impact of its partnerships has been perceived, there are currently no formal plans for reviewing their effectiveness in relation to student learning outcomes at the school.

National Safe Schools Framework: School Audit Tool

The analysis of the staff survey results found that Ngunnawal Primary School is performing well in all nine elements outlined in the Audit Tool. Elements 2 and 6 ('A supportive and connected school culture' and 'Engagement, skill development and safe school curriculum') were the strongest, while elements 4 and 7 ('Professional learning' and 'A focus on student wellbeing and student ownership') are indicated areas for growth in the next cycle.

Section E: Affirmations, commendations and recommendations

Affirmations

The External Review Panel offers the following affirmations for Ngunnawal Primary School.

1. Conversations with staff illustrated how the Friendly Schools program is providing a framework for enhancing social and emotional competencies through classrooms and school culture. Friendly Schools resources have supported the development of the school's anti-bullying guidelines.
2. Many structures have been identified and put in place to support consistency of language, planning and practice. These have been initial steps in developing the school as a professional learning community. Staff recognise the ambitious strategic agenda of the school and the high expectations the leadership holds.
3. There are pockets of excellence across the staff reflecting demonstrations of highly effective practice.
4. The leadership team has recognised the significance of engaging student voice.
5. The school has named inquiry as its signature pedagogy and begun its early implementation.
6. The school has made a significant investment in information and communication technology to support contemporary practice. Teachers are exploring different ways to connect and engage with families using technology such as the Google Apps for Education suite.
7. Parents appreciate the school's willingness to explore different ways of connecting with them.
8. Teachers are developing structures within their teams to support differentiation. They recognise the quality and accessibility of support and executive staff.
9. Learning support assistants/support staff have benefited from learning opportunities to build capability to support student needs, expanding the capacity for intervention.
10. The leadership team has commenced work on a database to capture the skills and knowledge of parents within the school community.
11. Staff have access to networks beyond the school. These include preschool and school library networks and professional associations.

Commendations

Ngunnawal Primary School is commended for the following.

1. Specialist teams bring experience and expertise in designing SMART goals for individual students and implementing approaches to support their attainment.
2. Strong beliefs and inclusive practices support the school's Indigenous students and community. Targeted resourcing in this area provides a highly valued interface between students, teachers and families.

3. Students have an obvious sense of belonging and are welcoming and respectful towards visitors.
4. The school's journey towards improving oral language is a strong example of data-driven, research-informed practice.

Recommendations

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

1. Develop an explicit improvement agenda, in the context of the school's vision, that is expressed in terms of specific improvements sought in student performance, is aligned with national and/or system-wide improvement priorities and includes clear targets with accompanying timelines that are rigorously actioned.
2. Embed a culture of professional learning that has a focus on the continuous and personalised improvement of staff and is closely aligned to the school's identified, explicit improvement agenda. Provide further professional development to build staff skills in analysing and interpreting data broadly, but especially, support the analysis of the targeted data identified within the improvement agenda.
3. Further expand the modes of communication and its regularity, to engage students, staff, families and the wider community with the improvement agenda of the school, its pedagogical approach, and the progressive achievements of students relative to this agenda.
4. Agree on, develop and support the consistent implementation of a pedagogical framework that outlines clear positions on the kinds of teaching to occur across the school relative to the school's vision for learning and the immediate, explicit improvement agenda.
5. Agree on, develop and support the implementation of a curriculum delivery plan that reflects a shared vision for the school, and provides a context for delivering the curriculum as detailed in the Australian Curriculum.

Section F: Record of school review process

The following people were members of the External Review Panel for Ngunnawal Primary School conducted on 8–10 August 2017.

Name: Ron Bamford External Review Panel – Chair

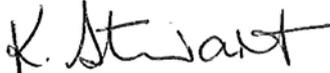
Name: Wendy Cave External Review Panel – Principal Member
Macquarie Primary School

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

Signature: 

Date: 27/09/2017

I, Kristine Stewart, as Principal of Ngunnawal Primary School accept this Review Report on behalf of the school community.

Signature: 

Date: 27/09/2017