



ACT
Government
Education

Torrens Primary School

Review Report Summary, 2018

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Overview of the school review process

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

Torrens Primary School is commended for the following.

- Its commitment to developing the whole child.
- The commitment shown by the leadership team and all staff to learning new skills to improve student outcomes.
- Staff going out of their way to help and support students. Parents and students spoke of the many learning opportunities students are offered outside the classroom environment.
- The widespread use of SENA and PM Benchmark data, in particular to support the construction and review of groupings in mathematics and English.
- Creating a welcoming, inclusive and happy learning environment where there are caring and strong relationships amongst staff, students and parents. It is evident there is a strong culture of learning. Students have an obvious sense of belonging and are welcoming and respectful towards peers and visitors
- Working closely with the Network Student Engagement Team and outside agencies to support students and to access professional learning and resources.
- The openness of teachers to collaborate with others around their classroom practice and planning.
- Its commitment to the guiding principles of NueEd to fully understand student behaviour.
- The ongoing partnership with Woden Community Services to develop the resilience of students.

Affirmations

The Review Team offers the following affirmations for Torrens Primary School.

- Developing and continually updating reading, SENA and OLSAT data, which enables the literacy and numeracy team to monitor improvement over time and to allocate resourcing and intervention.
- Implementing a comprehensive process to meet the special needs of students.
- Developing a culture of recognising achievement of students. Students talked about the ability to recognise achievements of other students.
- Continuously working to improve the partnership with parents.
- Staff implementing Seesaw to allow students to showcase their work and provide a real-time communication conduit to parents.
- Celebrating cultural diversity. Parents and students talked about how Harmony Day has been a vehicle for building multicultural understanding and acceptance.
- Engaging with the Directorate's priority in cultural integrity by embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in the curriculum and beyond the classroom.
- Developing gifted and talented procedures that include several intervention strategies including Lit Hit, extension and enrichment programs.
- Developing a matrix of staff talents to identify and support collegial mentoring.
- Staff developing assessment and moderation processes that reference the Australian Curriculum Achievement Standards and exemplars, and school work samples.
- Continuing to focus on staff professional learning in differentiation.
- Continuing to refine a conceptual framework to guide the development of integrated inquiry units.
- Teachers experimenting with learning intentions, success criteria, student goal-setting and conferencing to provide a student voice in their learning.
- Teachers planning collaboratively, team teaching, and using flexible groupings across year levels.
- Improving student voice in the community. Students talked about their ability to raise issues and lead projects within the school.

Recommendations

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

- Collaboratively develop a Torrens Primary School Strategic Plan 2019-2023 that is consistent with the 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 schedule, 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 performance, 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. Build leadership and staff data literacy skills.
- Further develop the school's professional learning plan to align processes for observation, mentoring and coaching across the school. The plan should consider the needs of new teachers to the school. Continue to build the school's capacity matrix and develop processes to share best practice to meet individual needs.
- Continue to refine the school's plan for curriculum delivery. The plan should reflect a shared vision for the school and have a strong focus on embedding general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities.
- Further develop teacher understanding of differentiation. This includes learning how to unpack data on each student, understand individual gaps in student learning and offer multiple means of representation and engagement and expression to cater for individual differences.
- Develop a coherent and explicit position on the kinds of evidenced-based teaching expected across the school. This includes how teachers might provide clarity about what students are expected to learn, how success might be measured, and feedback given. Further develop teacher skills in the use of technology to maximise learning and timely communication with parents so they can support the learning.