ACT Government
Education

Lyneham Primary School

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Publication and independent Review Team details

Date of School Review: 14, 15, 16 and 17 June 2022
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National School Improvement Tool Review Report prepared by:
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Report Date: 17 June 2022

Report of Review, 2022 prepared by:

ACT Government Education Directorate
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Overview of the School Review process

Approximately a fifth of all ACT public schools are reviewed each year. Reviews provide quality, independent, feedback tailored to individual school contexts. Findings from Review support annual implementation of a school's 5-year School Improvement Plan.

Reviews are undertaken by a team of experienced educators trained in the use of the *National School Improvement Tool* (NSIT) and are led by a Lead Reviewer from the Australian Council of Educational Research. Review Team size depends upon a range of factors, including the size and context of a school.

Through the lens of the NSIT, an internationally recognised framework for reviewing teaching and learning practices, reviewers gain an accurate picture of current school practices. During Review evidence provided by schools is considered alongside evidence gathered through consultation with staff, students, parents and community members.

Following Review, the school receives a planning report, which is used as an internal working document, outlining key findings and recommended strategies for continued school improvement. The Education Directorate uses this planning report as a basis for the final *Report of Review* provided to school communities.

The *Report of Review* includes detailed findings for each of the nine Domains of the National

School Improvement Tool, as well as Commendations, Affirmations and Recommendations for continued school improvement.

Where does Review sit within the school improvement cycle?

ACT public schools utilise systematic integration of evidence and data collection, access and analysis to inform sharp and narrow 5-year School Improvement Plans. Annually, all schools utilise a suite of tools to expand, monitor and report on these priorities. Additionally, schools are provided differentiated support and feedback by internal and external experts. School Review is one way that this differentiated feedback is provided and typically occurs at the end of the 5-year school improvement cycle.
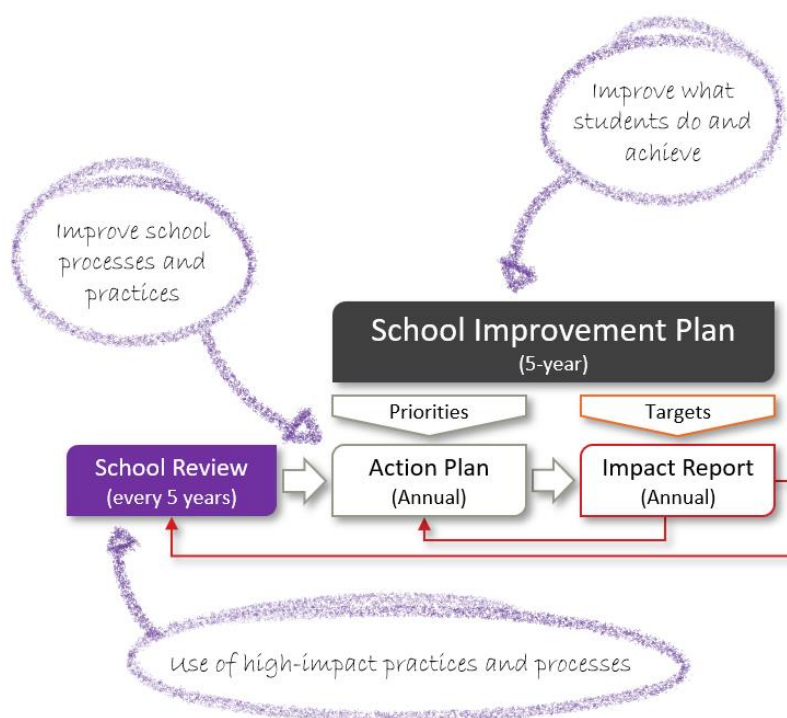
What are Commendations, Affirmations and Recommendations?

Commendations
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
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
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 effectively implementing its 5-year School Improvement Plan.

NSIT Domain 1: An explicit improvement agenda

Domain descriptor
The school leadership team and/or governing body have established and are driving a strong improvement agenda for the school, grounded in evidence from research and practice and expressed in terms of improvements in measurable student outcomes. Explicit and clear school-wide targets for improvement have been set and communicated to parents and families, teachers and students, with accompanying timelines.

Findings
- Members of the Board and Parents and Citizens (P&C) Association report that the newly formed leadership team is introducing initiatives to further improve teaching and learning in the school. The school leadership, teachers and staff express a commitment to improving the quality of teaching.

- Parents interviewed express support for the new principal and the planning for a learning-focused agenda.

- Parents interviewed are actively involved in the school and interested in progressing student learning.

- The school leadership team and teachers have collected a range of achievement, attendance, wellbeing and behavioural data to understand student learning. Leaders are in the process of developing a data plan as a starting point for a baseline to track student progress.

- Required data (NAPLAN), progress, targets and foci are reported to parents and the school community in annual action plans and impact statements.

- Annual surveys of parents and families in the school community are conducted.

- Lyneham has deliberately involved students (particularly leaders), parents, and families in framing the future vision and agenda for the school.

NSIT Domain 2: Analysis and discussion of data

Domain descriptor

A high priority is given to the school-wide analysis and discussion of systematically collected data on student outcomes, including academic, attendance and behavioural outcomes, and student wellbeing. Data analyses consider overall school performance as well as the performances of students from identified priority groups; evidence of improvement/ regression over time; performances in comparison with similar schools; and, in the case of data from standardised tests, measures of growth across the years of school.

Findings

- Lyneham collects a range of achievement, attendance, wellbeing and behavioural data in a variety of formats on Google Drive and a school management system.

- Data discussions are minuted in agendas for staff meetings, particularly professional learning community (PLC) meetings.

- Data for students identified as having English as a Second Language or Dialect (EAL/D) are collected, collated, analysed and published to teachers at least annually by the EAL/D teacher.

- Data are collected from surveys of parents, carers and students and then summarised in annual reports and impact statements.

- NAPLAN data are analysed and summarised in annual reports and impact statements published to the school community.

- The school has a statement of principles for classroom-based assessment.

- Attendance data are monitored, and behavioural and absentee data are collected.

NSIT Domain 3: A culture that promotes learning

Domain descriptor
The school is driven by a deep belief that every student is capable of successful learning. A high priority is given to building and maintaining positive and caring relationships between staff, students and parents. There is a strong collegial culture of mutual trust and support among teachers and school leaders and parents are treated as partners in the promotion of student learning and wellbeing. The school works to maintain a learning environment that is safe, respectful, tolerant, inclusive and that promotes intellectual rigour.

Findings
- School leaders and staff members place a high priority on developing and maintaining positive and caring relationships between staff, students and parents, and articulate and demonstrate a belief in the capability of every student to learn.

- There is some collegiality and collaboration between staff. There is also a developing collegial culture of mutual trust and support between teachers and school leaders.

- Interactions between staff, students, parents and families are positive, caring, polite and inclusive.

- There is a strong sense of connection to the school for students, staff and families.

- Lyneham has a strong values-based culture, with students, staff and parents in agreement that learners are happy, safe and enjoy their experience at school.

- Students speak with a sense of satisfaction about their school and express great affection for their teachers.

- Classrooms are busy but calm, exhibiting a very positive, respectful climate. Interruptions are kept to a minimum.

- Parents and staff express satisfaction in and speak highly of their school.

- Parents and families are viewed as integral members of the school community and partners in student learning. Communication through the Seesaw[1] application has been introduced and through the regular use of this software, parents receive regular updates about their child's learning. It also provides opportunities for parents to support their child's learning at home.

- Since the beginning of 2022, the Positive Behaviours for Learning (PBL) Framework has been introduced as the over-arching structure to support ongoing enhancement of a safe, respectful, tolerant, inclusive culture that promotes rigorous learning. Some of the school's Learner Assets[2] are being utilised as values and organisers of the PBL program.

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[1] *Seesaw is an **online remote learning and communication platform** designed for teachers, parents and student engagement. Teachers can empower students to create, reflect, share, and collaborate. Students "show what they know" using photos, videos, drawings, text, PDFs and links.*

[2] *The Learner Assets **Framework outlines the most important qualities and skills that good learners need in order to develop and enhance their learning.** The learner assets encourage students to be researchers, thinkers, collaborators, self-managers and communicators across all areas of learning.*

NSIT Domain 4: Targeted use of school resources

Domain descriptor
The school applies its resources (staff time, expertise, funds, facilities, materials) in a targeted manner to meet the learning and wellbeing needs of all students. It has school-wide policies, practices and programs in place to assist in identifying and addressing student needs. Flexible structures and processes enable the school to respond appropriately to the needs of individual learners.

Findings
- Year-level teams work collaboratively, within each group, to apply resources including staff expertise and time, facilities and materials to address identified student needs.

- The Board and P&C are actively advocating for high-priority improvements to the school buildings and facilities.

- The P&C has established its building improvement trust fund.

- Funds donated by parents have been used to purchase and implement InitiaLit 3 and MultiLit4 literacy programs. These funds are also used for staff professional learning, additional classroom literacy resources and for training school leaders in Teaching Sprints.5

- Resources are allocated to deliver intervention strategies for students who require additional support. This includes funding for an EAL/D teacher, and in-class support provided by learning assistants (LSAs) for students with identified additional needs.

- The school is addressing student wellbeing needs by providing a greater focus on implementing PBL. The approach incorporates the utilisation of Learning Assets to serve both as PBL values and organisers.

- The school purchases access to on-line learning programs Mathletics6 and ABC Reading Eggspress7 to provide additional resources to support students' learning.

- Resources are allocated to support the integration of technology. For years 4-6 students, there is a 1:1 ratio of Chromebooks. Shared iPads are available for Kindergarten students and shared Chromebooks for students in years 1-3.

- Flexible and colourful furniture arranged for group work is a feature of classrooms and learning spaces.

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[3] *InitiaLit (part of MultiLit) is an evidence-based, whole-class literacy program providing all children with the essential core knowledge and strong foundations to become successful readers and writers. InitiaLit is a three-year program, covering the first three years of school (Foundation to Year 2).*
[4] *MultiLit stands for "Making Up Lost Time in Literacy" and is an intensive reading program designed to increase children's progress in reading accuracy, fluency, comprehension and spelling.*
[5] **Teaching Sprints allow teachers to get better at what they do best through a manageable and meaningful approach to evidence-informed professional learning that draws on the features of effective professional development and the science of behaviour change.**
[6] *Mathletics empowers teachers to support their students' mathematics learning with hundreds of curriculum-aligned lessons and activities.*
[7] *ABC Reading Eggspress is designed to build children's skills in reading, comprehension, spelling, vocabulary and grammar in years 1 to 6 with highly engaging online literacy activities and games.*

NSIT Domain 5: An expert teaching team

Domain descriptor
The school has found ways to build a school-wide, professional team of highly able teachers, including teachers who take an active leadership role beyond the classroom. Strong procedures are in place to encourage a school-wide, shared responsibility for student learning and success, and to encourage the development of a culture of continuous professional improvement that includes classroom-based learning, mentoring and coaching arrangements.

Findings

- Lyneham has built a school-wide team of experienced teachers with a variety of skill sets. The leadership team is supportive of the day-to-day practice of teachers.

- Teachers are given opportunities to exercise leadership roles beyond the classroom, which is evident through the Emerging Leaders program.

- There is a start-of-year professional learning (PL) plan developed with teachers' team leaders, outlining an alternating focus each year, linked to the school's current (2018-2021) strategic plan.

- Teachers are allocated team-planning days in Terms 1, 2 and 3 to support shared planning.

- There are two shared spaces in the school where teachers work collaboratively to support student learning needs.

- Staff areas of expertise are utilised effectively. For example, Early Childhood-qualified staff are well placed in the junior school and an Indigenous Officer (IO) works across the school.

- The leadership team is training in Teaching Sprints implemented through team-based PLCs.

- The principal engages in professional learning, as well as presenting at cross-sector conferences.

- All Kindergarten to Year 2 staff have been trained in the InitiaLit program in Term 1 this year. Some teachers and executive have been trained in the MacqLit8 program in Term 1 this year.

- In 2019, all staff engaged with consultant Chris Topfer,9 with K-2 working intensively to build pedagogical understanding through the 10 Essential Instructional Practices in Literacy.

- Team leaders are working with year-level teams to build processes to be more collaborative and develop shared ownership of all planning.

- The school leadership team has engaged with the University of Newcastle in a case study

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8 *MacqLit (part of MultiLit) is an explicit and systematic reading intervention program for small groups of older low-progress readers.*
9 *Christine Topfer is an Australian education consultant and author of Guiding Thinking for Effective Spelling.*

agreement to implement PL around the Quality Teaching model. 10 A group of teachers has expressed interest in being part of the pilot program in 2022.

- LSAs meet fortnightly to discuss a mixture of strategic and operational items, including targeted professional discussions and PL to support student needs. LSAs report that they feel supported, and that further training is proposed to build their effectiveness in this role.

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[10] *The QT model provides **18 elements of "quality teaching" and a method of scoring/quantifying these**. It means that a teacher's practice is observed by other teachers and the lesson is then scored using the QT model's coding scale.*

NSIT Domain 6: Systematic curriculum delivery

Domain descriptor
The school has a coherent, sequenced plan for curriculum delivery that ensures consistent teaching and learning expectations and a clear reference for monitoring learning across the year levels. The plan, within which evidence-based teaching practices are embedded, and to which assessment and reporting procedures are aligned, has been developed with reference to the Australian Curriculum or other approved curriculum and refined collaboratively to provide a shared vision for curriculum practice. This plan is shared with parents and families.

Findings

- An odd (year 1, 3 and 5) and even year (K, 2, 4 and 6) curriculum overview has been developed by the inquiry school improvement team.[11]

- The documents Numeracy at Lyneham and Literacy at Lyneham have been produced and published to teachers and staff in handbooks by the year-level teams.

- Exploration of an inquiry approach to pedagogy is under way and work has commenced to incorporate the Learner Assets as curriculum organisers and as a means of emphasising the general capabilities of the Australian Curriculum.

- Curriculum implementation and lesson planning occur within year-level teams.

- Lessons are planned using resources from a range of sources, selected by teachers working within those teams.

- There is some evidence of alignment with the Australian Curriculum achievement standards in the year-level curriculum plans.

- The InitiaLit program has been implemented in Years K and years 1 and 2.

- Year-level teams are monitoring implementation and impact of InitiaLit, MacqLit, and MultiLit.

- School Leaders provide templates for biannual written reporting to parents, and year-level teams moderate some work samples to achieve consistency in A to E ratings.[12]

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[11] *This team was developed by interested staff after Christine Topfer introduced 10 Essential Instructional Practices for Literacy in 2019.*
[12] *The **A to E** grading scale allows teachers report student academic achievements at any point in time using clear standards.*

NSIT Domain 7: Differentiated teaching and learning

Domain descriptor
The school places a high priority on ensuring that, in their day-to-day teaching, classroom teachers identify and address the learning needs of individual students, including high-achieving students. Teachers are encouraged and supported to monitor closely the progress of individuals, identify learning difficulties and tailor classroom activities to levels of readiness and need.

Findings
- Teachers and leaders recognise that students are at different stages in their learning.

- Grouping is the key differentiation strategy used across the school, particularly in reading, and is predominately year-level based.

- Some teachers articulate wellbeing and engagement as the foci for differentiation in the classroom.

- Some teachers use in-class formative assessment strategies to determine groupings and to identify starting points for teaching.

- MultiLit programs (InitiaLit and MacqLit) have been implemented in Term 2 this year.

- Some year-level teams have agreed on common assessments. An agreed whole-school assessment and monitoring schedule is being developed.

- The school has yet to articulate a systematic approach to differentiation that provides appropriate and effective challenge for all students.

- Students express varying degrees of satisfaction with the level of challenge and extension they experience in their classes.

- Some parents feel that they would like a more personalised approach to supporting student learning to ensure the best outcomes possible are achieved.

- LSAs work in classrooms with individual students or small groups, as directed by the classroom teacher, to support additional learning and/or behavioural needs.

- Teachers consult with families to develop individual learning plans and to document reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of each student.

- The EAL/D teacher supports about 60 students, using a model of part withdrawal and part shoulder-to-shoulder in-class support. Data are used to help ongoing support needs.

- Seesaw is used to provide information to families about where students are in their learning and current teaching concepts.

- Parents are provided with some information on student progress and achievement through written reports, parent interviews and Seesaw. Some parents articulate that they would like further information to be able to support their children at home in their learning.

- The school has a tiered intervention model of student support, with some teachers and leaders unsure of the current processes. Some school leaders express a desire to update this model and provide clarity around these processes.

- Some enrichment opportunities exist for older students: for example, peer workshops in year 5/6 classes, the instrumental music program band, the performing arts production, computer coding, da Vinci Decathlon[13] and Australian Maths challenge.[14]

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[13] *The da Vinci Decathlon is an **academic competition designed to challenge and stimulate the minds of school students**. Students compete in teams of eight across 10 disciplines including engineering, mathematics, code breaking, art and poetry, science and English.*

[14] *The Australian Maths Challenge is a **competition run by the Australian Maths Trust which involves students solving complex multi part problems**. The students complete this competition in their own time over a number of weeks.*

NSIT Domain 8: Effective pedagogical practices

Domain descriptor

The school principal and other school leaders recognise that highly effective teaching is the key to improving student learning throughout the school. They take a strong leadership role, encouraging the use of research-based teaching practices in all classrooms to ensure that every student is engaged, challenged and learning successfully. All teachers understand and use effective teaching methods – including explicit instruction – to maximise student learning.

Findings

- Staff report that they value an inquiry-based approach, but have varying understanding of what that means for their classroom practice. Students are unable to articulate what is meant by "inquiry".

- In year 5/6 classrooms, there are occasional peer workshops where students are able to share their passions and expertise with their classmates.

- Students in years 3-6 express that they would like more opportunities to explore their passions and interests connected to their learning at school. Some parents also articulate they would like to see students provided with that opportunity.

- The Learner Assets are used as the framework for privileging the general capabilities and supporting student metacognition.

- Student understanding varies about what they are learning, why they are learning it and the steps they need to take to improve.

- Teachers and leaders are committed to improving practice, with a focus through the Teaching Sprints to develop shared understanding.

- The leadership team is discussing plans to establish a consistent set of school-wide pedagogies

NSIT Domain 9: School-community partnerships

Domain descriptor

The school actively seeks ways to enhance student learning and wellbeing by partnering with parents and families, other education and training institutions, local businesses and community organisations. Parents and families are recognised as integral members of the school community and partners in their children's education. Partnerships are strategically established to address identified student needs and operate by providing access to experiences, support and intellectual and/or physical resources not available within the school. All partners are committed to the common purposes and goals of partnership activities. Procedures are in place to ensure effective communications and to monitor and evaluate the intended impacts of the school's partnerships.

Findings

- Lyneham Primary School has a partnership with Lyneham High School for the Year 9 physical education (Principles of Sport Education) students to provide targeted coaching and mentoring for year 5/6. This partnership has just been established.

- The school has an agreement with the University of Canberra, Australian Catholic University and Griffith University to provide pre-service mentoring and supervision to four pre-service teachers.

- The school has an agreement with Newcastle University to provide the Quality Teaching model through the university's Quality Teaching Academy. This model provides access to research, whole-school understanding of pedagogy and team teaching. This partnership has just been established.

- The Lyneham Primary School P&C provides in-kind and active support for the school's Forest Classroom (an outdoor classroom space).

- The school has a partnership with artKids which is an after-school and lunchtime art and drawing program that focuses on building children's drawing and observational skills.

- The school has a partnership with Block Crafters: Kids Coding and Robotics which is an after-school activity where students learn about computer coding, robotics, engineering and design. This partnership started at the beginning of 2022.

Commendations

Lyneham Primary School is commended for:

- The school's collection, collation, analysis and publication of relevant data for identified EAL/D students.
- The annual publication of action and impact reports summarising NAPLAN and wellbeing data.
- Having resources allocated to deliver intervention strategies for students who require additional support. This includes allocating resources for an EAL/D teacher, and in-class support provided by LSAs and the IO for students with identified additional needs.
- The strong sense of connection to the school for students, staff and families.
- Students having a sense of satisfaction about their school and expressing great affection for their teachers.
- Parents and staff expressing satisfaction in and speaking highly of their school.
- Having two shared spaces in the school where teachers work collaboratively to support student learning needs.
- LSAs working in classrooms with individual students or small groups, as directed by the classroom teacher, to support additional learning and/or behavioural needs.

Affirmations

Lyneham Primary School is affirmed for:

- Actively seeking partnerships which contribute to student and staff learning outcomes.
- Proposing a data plan as a starting point for establishing an explicit improvement agenda.
- Deliberately involving parents, families and students in framing the future vision and agenda.
- Collecting a range of achievement, attendance, wellbeing and behavioural data.
- Having data as an item on PLC meeting agendas.
- The Board and P&C Association actively advocating for and supporting improvements to the school buildings and facilities.
- Allocating resources to support the integration of technology.
- Providing flexible and colourful furniture as a feature of classrooms and learning spaces to encourage grouping students for learning activities.
- Articulating a belief in the capability of every student to learn.
- Developing a collegial culture of mutual trust and support among teachers and school leaders.
- Further enhancing student wellbeing across the whole school.

- Exploration of an inquiry approach to pedagogy and commencing the incorporation of the Learner Assets as curriculum organisers and as a means of emphasising the general capabilities of the Australian Curriculum.

- Giving teachers the opportunity to build their leadership capabilities.

- Encouraging teachers to take leadership roles within their areas of expertise to support school priorities.

- Teachers and leaders being committed to improving teacher practice.

Recommendations

- Develop an annual school-wide assessment schedule and data plan to support the regular discussion and analysis of selected data, including quality classroom assessments.

- Use data to establish a clear, explicit improvement agenda which is expressed in measurable targets for student learning. Communicate those targets to all stakeholders.

- Collaboratively develop and implement a school-wide pedagogical framework, building a culture where staff work together to improve student outcomes.

- Develop an explicit, coherent, sequenced plan for curriculum delivery across the years of school which makes clear what (and when) teachers should teach and children should learn.

- Build a focus on personalising learning. Ensure that all students, including high-achieving ones, are given agency, appropriately challenged, and extended by designing learning that meets individual needs, interests and aspirations