

External School Review – Watervale Primary School

Across our education system, we seek growth for every student, in every class, and in every school.

The external school review value-adds and supports schools to raise student achievement and sustain high performance by providing an expert external perspective on school performance by verifying or challenging:

- a school's improvement planning and processes and its impact on student learning
- the impact of previous external school directions
- the rigour of a school's improvement practices
- the school's capacity to achieve or sustain learning improvement over time.

The external school review lines of inquiry focus on:

- quality school improvement planning
- expert teaching
- quality leadership
- conditions for optimal learning.

The overarching question in every external school review is: How well does the school improve achievement, growth, challenge, engagement, and equity?

Impact of directions from the previous External School Review in November 2019

The current principal has been in the position for 24 months and has taken actions to address the previous External School Review directions, with a high level of work associated with increasing staff knowledge and understanding the purpose of the School Improvement Plan. This has been supported with regular scheduled time allocated for reviewing the plan and having all staff involved in the development of the current School Improvement Plan. The plan is now seen as core business and a compulsory item in the staff meeting agenda. The Governing Council members indicated that they get regular updates of the School Improvement Plan progress that is evidenced by data. A general confidence has grown with the staff around tracking and monitoring data related to goals and targets.

The school has addressed the upskilling staff to increase their knowledge and planning of the Australian Curriculum. This work has been led and supported by the Principal Consultant and Curriculum Lead. The use of department curriculum consultants has been used to support teachers with implementing a quality phonics and writing programs. An external consultant has been commissioned to successfully upskill staff in mathematics. Work on building teacher and student understanding and use of learning intentions, success criteria and learning goals has been supported by the principal consultant. Units of work are being implemented across the school in different curriculum areas.

Within a small school context, staff meetings are the main process used for shared professional learning.

The professional learning is increasingly targeted and has been strengthened using TEAMS to share information. It is evident that the school is now focusing on a whole-school sequence of teaching rather than using set programs.

Outcomes from the External School Review held in November 2022

The principal will work with the education director to implement the following directions:

- Direction 1** Build on the coherent school-wide approach to the ongoing development of teacher capability and efficacy in the knowledge of curriculum and pedagogy to maximise student learning.
- Direction 2** Align and embed professional learning processes to improve teacher capability and create opportunities for shared leadership.
- Direction 3** To ensure authentic student influence in their learning, strengthen teacher knowledge and action to embed student agency in learning design, assessment, and feedback loop between students and teachers.

These directions are published on the school improvement plan and will support the school's ongoing improvement work.

Based on the school's current performance, Watervale Primary School will be externally reviewed again in 2025.



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