

Negotiated School Review Report

Prepared for
Oakleigh Primary School
Eastern Metropolitan Region
School Improvement Division
Department of Education & Early Childhood
Development
2009

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1.0 Executive Summary

The aims of this review were to assess the overall performance in the Strategic Planning period 2006-2008, examine the quality of teaching and learning in classrooms across the school and analyse the extent to which teachers share their practice and use data and feedback effectively to inform and transform teaching and learning.

The methodology included comprehensive analysis of all data by staff, consultation with students and parents and engagement of a critical friend who completed an analysis of performance, observed classroom across the school and conducted interviews with teachers and student leaders as well as facilitating a parent forum.

Oakleigh Primary School is a highly successful organisation, with evidence of high achievement, strong leadership, effective teamwork and committed staff.

Central to this school's success is the dedicated and highly effective leadership team, led by a very supportive principal, Cheryl Sanders. This principal is a genuine instructional leader who has a sound understanding of curriculum, assessment and pedagogy.

Teamwork is promoted at this school. There are some fine examples of very effective team teaching, and team planning is central to teachers' work.

Oakleigh Primary School has generally met or exceeded all goals set in the previous School Strategic Plan that relate to Student Learning and Student Pathways and Transitions.

There is a great deal to celebrate in the school. Student learning, during the last review period, has reached high levels throughout the school. The Early Years Program (Prep – Year 2) results in over 95% of students reading at 90%-100% accuracy by the time they reach Grade 2. NAPLAN, AIM and teacher assessed results have been very consistent, consistently exceeding state means and expectations for this type of school. There has been an appropriate rate of learning growth for students as they progress through the school.

Absence rates have generally matched the state means during the review period, comparing well with other schools of this type. Parent Opinion Survey outcomes are generally good, Staff Opinion Survey results have improved significantly over the review period, and the results from the student Attitudes to School Survey are strong in the areas of Wellbeing and Relationships.

Transition programs are well-organised, well-resourced and successful. There is a high level of communication between teachers and a comprehensive understanding of students which results in effective transition through the school.

The school was successfully accredited in the DEECD “Performance and Development Culture” program.

The school has a very committed and involved school council.

The review process has highlighted a number of areas within the school that will form the basis for improvement in the next review period. This reviewer believes strongly that the school is very well-placed to move into the next strategic planning period (2009-2013), with excellent leadership, highly skilled and effective teachers, and a supportive community.

With respect to Student Learning, the review has identified that, despite excellent results across the board, there is a continuing need to strengthen outcomes in Literacy and Numeracy. This will be achieved, in part, by further building teacher capacity, strengthening teamwork and collaboration, and through innovation in ICT. Teachers will be challenged to provide for more purposeful inquiry, a more personalised approach to learning and a 21st Century ICT environment.

With respect to Engagement and Wellbeing, particularly students’ attitudes towards teaching and learning, it has been recommended that the school increase students’ capacity to take an appropriate level of responsibility for their learning.

This negotiated school review has provided Oakleigh Primary School with the chance to carefully evaluate its performance during the last strategic planning period and to develop a range of improvement strategies that will form the basis of the next 4-year strategic plan.

I thank the principal, staff, students and community for making me feel welcome and I would like to acknowledge the hard work of the leadership team and staff in preparation for the review and for the participation of staff and school council president in the review day.

I wish the school well with its future development and trust that this report assists in that endeavour.

Martin Winfield

Key Recommendations Summary

Goals	Key Improvement Strategies
<p>Student Learning</p> <p>To improve achievement in the Mathematics, English and ICT domains</p>	<p>Plan for more purposeful inquiry, deep, rich and personalised learning with increased levels of student responsibility for learning and student decision making.</p> <p>Further develop high expectations of student achievement</p> <p>Develop a more consistent instructional approach in English and Mathematics across the school</p> <p>Build an innovative ICT environment, to enhance learning, motivation and engagement.</p> <p>Continue to build Teacher Capacity by focussing on high-quality professional learning in the areas of Literacy and Numeracy and ICT, (curriculum, pedagogy and assessment)</p> <p>Enhance reflective practices and extend coaching across the school</p>
<p>Student Pathways and Transitions</p> <p>To improve transition for students as they move through the school</p>	<p>Ensure that approaches to teaching and learning are consistent P-6 and sequential between classes</p> <p>Continue to strengthen assessment for learning and communication on student learning outcomes and learning styles between classes with a focus on consistent pedagogy and high expectations</p>
<p>Student Engagement and Wellbeing</p> <p>To improve engagement of all students by explicitly planning for greater levels of curriculum innovation, student independence and interdependence</p>	<p>Increase student decision-making, responsibility and student voice</p> <p>Develop a more calm and orderly school environment</p>

2.0 Aim / Purpose

The Negotiated Review Terms of Reference identified the following areas for analysis and review:

1. Identify strengths and areas for improvement in student outcomes, teacher practice and the learning environment
2. Analyse the extent to which teachers share their practice

3.0 Methodology

In preparation for the school review, the principal, together with the school leadership team determined the review focus and drafted the terms of reference.

Staff and school council were briefed on the review process by the principal.

The staff met during terms 1 and 2 to analyse all the data and consider future directions.

A “Negotiated Review Day” was held on Thursday 10 September, which involved the Principal and Assistant principal, Regional Network Leader, staff and School Council President.

Martin Winfield was chosen as the school’s critical friend. Martin is an accredited school reviewer, past Senior Education Officer and a past Primary School Principal. This background has given Martin an understanding and awareness of the school and community’s needs.

The critical friend’s role included:

1. Assisting in preparation for the school review
2. Conducting a student focus group
3. Interviewing key members of staff
4. Facilitating a parent forum
5. Presenting a report on the school’s performance to the staff
6. Presenting a report on the school’s performance to school council
7. Documentation of the Negotiated Review Report

4.0 Findings

This critical friend agrees wholeheartedly with the observation in the School Self Evaluation that in respect to the previous review period:

“Our ‘School Self Evaluation’ indicates that we have achieved excellent academic results.”

It is clear that the school provides a wide range of programs, presented by very talented staff, supported by a high-performing principal and leadership team.

ASSESSMENT OF PERFORMANCE

STUDENT LEARNING

Assessment of Reading P-2

Prep to Year 2 reading results are quite strong with over 95% percent of students reading above 90% accuracy by the time they reach Grade 2. There is an improvement trend at Grade Prep with results 2006-2008 exceeding the state benchmarks. Results compared to other schools show outcomes consistently matching or exceeding the Student Family Occupation percentile in Prep (which means that Oakleigh students perform higher than this socioeconomic measure predicts) but generally falling below this Band in Grade 1 and Grade 2. With respect to reading, the 3-year early years program at Oakleigh Primary School prepares most students relatively well for transition into the middle section of the school.

The school has acknowledged the significant impact on results of students enrolling from diverse backgrounds with high variation in readiness for literacy learning. This may, in part, explain lower outcomes for some students in the P-2 area. It is recommended that the school looks at its intervention strategy at Grade 1 (Reading Recovery/Intervention) and in Prep and Grade 2 in order to enable the school to improve performance as student’s transition into grade 3 and beyond.

English and Mathematics CSF/VELS

Teacher judgements appear to be very accurate and compare favourably with Assessment of reading and NAPLAN/AIM results. There is a very pleasing ‘spread’ of results, with a significant percentage of students awarded an “A” or “B”. Comparison with other schools at this level shows results generally matching or exceeding the state means and SFO Percentile Band. It is very pleasing to see low numbers of students assessed below

expected levels (“D” and “E”), with only a handful of students assessed at level “E” across the whole school.

Teacher assessments of English and Mathematics achievement show high levels of attainment across the board. These results match the outstanding NAPLAN and AIM results for Literacy and Numeracy.

NAPLAN 2008

NAPLAN results in Reading, Writing and Numeracy were very good, exceeding the State Mean Score at Grade 3 and Grade 5. The School Mean as a Percentile matched or exceeded the SFO Percentile Band and Grade 3 and Grade 5.

AIM

AIM results at Year 3 and Year 5 in Reading and Number are excellent and show an improvement trend for the period 2003-2006. Means are generally at or above the state benchmarks. School means expressed as a percentile have consistently exceed the SFO percentile during the review period indicating that at grade 3 and grade 5, results for students at Oakleigh Primary School exceed expectations for this type of school. Results show strong learning growth from year 3 to year 5 and low proportions of students achieving below indicative levels, especially in Grade 3.

I.C.T.

Oakleigh Primary School has an up to date network and has recently introduced Interactive Whiteboards to the school.

This critical friend feels that, whilst some gains have been made, the current ICT program needs to be reviewed and improved. If the aim is to provide a truly ICT - rich CLASSROOM environment, there needs to be further transition from a ‘software-based’ and ‘subject-based’ program to a fully integrated, responsive and personalised classroom-based system which genuinely meets the ongoing communication and research needs of individual students and 21st Century learners, as and when those needs arise.

Planning

Team planning is a feature of the programs at Oakleigh Primary School.

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND WELLBEING

Results from the student survey confirm the reasonably high and improving levels of wellbeing and strong student relationships at Oakleigh Primary School. Lower outcomes in

the area of Teaching and Learning have significant implications for motivation, interest and engagement in learning.

School Culture

Results and discussions on the review day point to a healthy, positive and improving culture at this school. Improving levels of morale among students and staff, together with high levels of teamwork are seen as important potential contributors to this school's future success.

Learning Environment

The teachers at Oakleigh Primary School exhibit very high levels of enthusiasm. They appear to thoroughly enjoy their role as teachers and this infectious enjoyment of their work is reflected in the children's response. There is a consistent dynamic and positive relationship between teachers and children. This strong rapport is evident at all grade levels.

Teachers at Oakleigh Primary School exhibit high level teaching ability.

The classroom environment is generally attractive and stimulating. There is clear evidence in many classrooms of the topic being studied, with charts and whiteboards clearly explaining routines (e.g. Literacy Groups) and plenty of student work. The quality of the class environment and of student work displayed varies across the school. This has implications for consistent high-level expectations of student work.

Use of ICT is somewhat limited. It is recommended that a truly ICT rich environment should involve transition from a 'program-based' and 'subject-based' program on a handful of computers at the side of a classroom to a fully integrated, responsive and personalised system which genuinely meets the inquiry, communication and research needs of individual students, when those needs arise. To achieve this, thought needs to be given to location of ICT, type of hardware (Interactive whiteboards / notebooks / palm / iPod / phones) and the use of sophisticated e-learning strategies (podcasting / webcasting / blogs / Wikkis / Nings).

There is evidence of consistent approach to Literacy (groups / block) operating across the school.

LEADERSHIP

Leadership is critical to the success of this school. High-level leadership is evident at this school. The school has a strong and committed principal who enjoys a very high level of support from her leadership team and staff. Succession planning and opportunities for advancement ensure that new leaders are being developed within Oakleigh Primary School. Leadership is distributed beyond the principal team and teachers at all levels are expected

to be responsible and accountable for their specific leadership and coordination responsibilities.

This critical friend believes that the high levels of responsibility, motivation and decision-making capacity exhibited by students should be further capitalised on. This will involve greater levels of decision-making, responsibility and accountability for their learning.

CHALLENGES

The school has identified significant challenges for the future, which together with observations of performance by this critical friend, have formed the basis for conclusions and recommendations:

- Improving achievement in English and Mathematics
- Strengthening the P-2 program
- Providing for more purposeful and rich inquiry
- Planning a seamless and consistent curriculum at all levels
- Implementation of more consistent instructional approaches across the school
- Improving the ICT environment
- Explicitly planning for the needs of high achieving students, students at risk and ESL students
- Improving student motivation and attitude towards learning
- Increasing student decision making and responsibility for learning

5.0 Conclusions and recommendations

Student Learning

Goals	Targets	Key Improvement Strategies	Suggested actions (optional)
To improve achievement in the Mathematics, English and ICT domains	<p>85%of students in Prep / 95% of students in Grade 1 / 98% students in Grade 2 achieve the VELS minimum standard (1.00 / 1.50 / 2.00) in the English online interview</p> <p>Reduce to 10%, the students assessed at Bands 1 and 2 in Grade 3 in NAPLAN Reading</p> <p>Increase NAPLAN Mean Scaled Score at Grade 5 in Reading, Writing and Numeracy to 530, with at least 40% of students at Bands 7 and 8</p>	<p>Plan for more purposeful inquiry, deep, rich and personalised learning with increased levels of student responsibility for learning and student decision making.</p> <p>Further develop high expectations of student achievement</p> <p>Develop a more consistent instructional approach in English and Mathematics across the school</p> <p>Build an innovative ICT environment, to enhance learning, motivation and engagement.</p> <p>Continue to build Teacher Capacity by focussing on high-quality professional learning in the areas of Literacy and Numeracy and ICT, (curriculum, pedagogy and assessment)</p> <p>Enhance reflective practices and extend coaching across the school</p>	<p>Develop a comprehensive Scope and Sequence of High Quality Integrated Units of work using the inquiry approach at each VELS level</p> <p>Enhance the Early Years Literacy program</p> <p>Appoint a trained P-2 Literacy Coordinator</p> <p>Strengthen Literacy intervention across the school, with a particular emphasis on P-2</p> <p>Explicitly plan for the classroom needs of high achieving students</p> <p>Explicitly plan for the needs of ESL (LBOTE) students</p> <p>Improve the ICT environment, to include interactive whiteboards, blogs, podcasting, webcasting and ultra mobile PCs to enhance learning, motivation and engagement</p> <p>Develop a Strategic Professional Learning Plan, which engages all Oakleigh teachers, based on principles of teamwork,</p>

			<p>coaching, observation and reflection, incorporating the emerging school, state and network priorities (Early Years Literacy and Numeracy, Writing, NAPLAN, E5, ICT, Assessment)</p> <p>Use PoLT and the E5 instructional model to secure consistency in instruction across the school and develop shared understandings and language about student learning and instruction</p>
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Student Engagement and Wellbeing

Goals	Targets	Key Improvement Strategies	Suggested actions (optional)
To improve engagement of all students by explicitly planning for greater levels of curriculum innovation, student independence and interdependence	<p>For Attitudes to School Survey results to be consistently in the third and fourth quartile for both girls and boys and years 5 and 6 in the area of “Teaching and Learning” during the strategic planning period</p> <p>Parent Opinion of areas related to Learning and Engagement to reach:</p> <p>Stimulating Learning: 5.85</p> <p>Learning Focus: 5.75</p> <p>Student Motivation: 5.75</p> <p>Absences to reduce to an average of 12 days per student</p>	<p>Increase student decision-making, responsibility and student voice</p> <p>Develop a more calm and orderly school environment</p>	<p>Increase student capacity to negotiate learning and monitor acquisition of skills, competencies and knowledge</p> <p>Enhance student goal and target setting</p> <p>Continue to enhance leadership programs</p> <p>Develop a School Engagement Policy.</p> <p>Implement programs such as “Restorative Practices” more comprehensively across the whole school.</p> <p>Consider student-led, 3-way conferences using digital portfolios.</p> <p>Implement a class liaison program to strengthen connections with the school community and enhance class relationships</p>

Student Pathways and Transitions

Goals	Targets	Key Improvement Strategies	Suggested actions (optional)
To improve transition for students as they move through the school		<p>Ensure that approaches to teaching and learning are consistent P-6 and sequential between classes</p> <p>Continue to strengthen assessment for learning and communication on student learning outcomes and learning styles between classes with a focus on consistent pedagogy and high expectations</p>	<p>Continue improving the assessment schedule</p> <p>Develop improved ICT-based systems to record, track and REGULARLY DISCUSS student progress in and between level teams</p> <p>Develop an orientation program for new parents to the school</p>