

Department for Education External School Review

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

Report for Open Access College

Conducted in August 2021



Review details

Our education system aspires to become the best in Australia by seeking growth for every student, in every class and in every school.

The purpose of the External School Review (ESR) is to support schools to raise achievement, sustain high performance and to provide quality assurance to build and sustain public confidence in government schools.

The External School Review framework is referenced throughout all stages of the ESR process.

This report outlines aspects of the school's performance verified through the review process according to the framework. It does not document every aspect of the school's processes, programs and outcomes.

We acknowledge the support and cooperation provided by the staff and school community. While not all review processes, artefacts and comments are documented here, they have all been considered and contribute to the development and directions of this report.

This review was conducted by Maxine McSherry, Review Officer of the department's Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate and Rebecca Pears and Kylie Eggers, Review Principals.

Review Process

The following processes were used to gather evidence relevant to the lines of inquiry:

- Presentation from the Principal
- On-line class visits
- Attendance at staff meeting
- Document analysis
- Discussions with:
 - Governing Council representatives
 - Leaders
 - Parent groups
 - School Services Officers (SSOs)
 - Student representatives
 - Teachers.

School context

Open Access College caters for students from reception to year 12, including a small number of adult re-entry students. It is situated 5kms from the Adelaide CBD. The enrolment in 2021, is 1432. Enrolment at the time of the previous review was 1200. Enrolments change throughout the year due to the continuous enrolment process, with the school catering for between 4,500-5000 students. The local partnership is Central East .

The school has a ICSEA score of 1020 and is classified as Category 4 on the Department for Education Index of Educational Disadvantage.

The school population includes 5% Aboriginal students, 12% students with disabilities, 3% students with English as an additional language or dialect (EALD) background and 36% of students eligible for School Card assistance.

The school leadership team consists of a Principal in their 15th year of tenure, a deputy principal, 5 assistant principals and a head of campus based at the School of the Air in Port Augusta. There are an additional 19 leaders including 11 teaching and learning coordinators, 5 student wellbeing leaders, an intervention leader, a vocational education and training (VET) leader and a library manager.

The school employs a social worker and youth worker.

Open Access College provides access to learning and specific courses for students who are unable to access learning or subjects through mainstream schools.

There are 137 teachers including 25 in the early years of their career and 103 step 9 teachers.

The previous ESR or OTE directions were:

- Direction 1** Consolidate consistent practice and ensure all teachers implement the college's agreed planning and pedagogical practices by reviewing collecting understandings of expectations and embedding a robust culture of accountability.
- Direction 2** Strengthen the school's priority to increase learning growth for all learners by building teachers' data literacy, enabling them to accurately analyze students' achievement data and plan responsively.
- Direction 3** Reinforce a collective response to the school's agreed priorities through the design of professional learning and performance and development systems for both teachers and leaders, which are coherently led, planned and consistently conducted.

What impact has the implementation of previous directions had on school improvement?

A culture of accountability has been established with the introduction of strategic teams to embed school improvement. The introduction of the Berry Street Model to support children who have experienced trauma, sits beneath the pedagogical practices at Open Access College. A flipped learning approach has been introduced with a focus on gradual release of responsibility (GRR) leading to an increased level of flexibility and independence in learning.

Learning intentions and success criteria have been implemented as part of the teaching and learning cycle and access to data has been improved for all staff through accessing the departments platform. Day Map is used by teachers to record, track and analyse student data.

Performance development of staff reflects whole-school agreements and priorities blended with individual goal setting.

Effective school improvement planning

How well does the school use evidence from student achievement and growth data to inform relevant and high impact goals and targets for improvement?

The school improvement plan (SIP) is developed by leaders with a shared challenge of practice for the 4 different sub-sections of the school, including Primary, STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) HUMS (Humanities) and Languages. Sub school leaders and teachers explained how they embedded the goals and actions at their level into programs in line with the SIP. Parents were aware of the goals for improvement and reported they had been discussed at length at governing council meetings.

A diverse range of age appropriate, relevant data sets are used across the different year level bands by both teachers and the sub school teams. This year has seen the introduction of collaborative data analysis in learning band teams, with a focus on further improving outcomes for highly vulnerable students.

A range of evidence showed how data is used to influence decision making and classroom practice. The 2020 SACE data was cross referenced with achievement grades to identify trends, resulting in the reorganisation of maths structures. Year 10 maths was separated into two groups, one with a focus on year 10 Australian Curriculum and the second with an essential maths focus. The latter was incorporated into the South Australian Certificate of Education. This restructure provides a pathway for all students. Early data analysis is showing positive results towards this structural reorganisation and it will be reviewed at the end of the year.

Teachers articulated there was a clear expectation to collect and collaboratively analyse with leaders the data from six of their students. This was an ongoing process and was used to inform their practice.

Open Access College is well positioned to build on the structures and processes they have in place through the sub sections of the school. Strategic teams review and evaluate the effectiveness of their processes to determine the impact they are having on student learning outcomes.

Direction 1 Further build on collaborative data analysis at the classroom and sub school level to evaluate the effectiveness of actions implemented and to set future direction.

Effective teaching and student learning

How effectively are teachers using evidence based pedagogical practices that engage and challenge all learners?

The panel observed visuals being used creatively to keep learners engaged in the online learning platforms. Success criteria and learning intentions were evident in some classrooms as were ready to learn gauges, brain breaks and consistent predictable routines. Scaffolding was incorporated into each lesson providing both support and challenge, enabling students to engage at their level. High levels of teacher interaction with explicit teaching strategies were evident, with tasks and assessments adjusted to ensure different entry and exit points.

Feedback in both verbal and visual form was used to set the pace of the lesson and review the introduction of new learning. Teachers reported the use of exit slips, emails, google classrooms and DAYMAP as strategies used to seek feedback from students.

Quality differentiated teaching programs are indicators which have been written for primary, middle and senior school to help guide teachers on what effective pedagogy looks like in an online learning environment. There was a varying degree of staff awareness of the agreements and the school is now well placed to embed these through professional learning opportunities to ensure they are being used consistently.

Gradual release of responsibility is an approach that is used across the whole-school to build independence and challenge all learners. Model, share, guide and apply or I do, we do, you do were two approaches identified in panel observations.

Students reported that their learning needs were being met, describing teachers as contactable, supportive, and flexible. They shared that they are aiming for the best grades that they can achieve and what they need to do to improve. There was a common agreement that they receive quality feedback from their teachers verbally and in writing.

The introduction of the Duke of Edinburgh program was supporting some students to build on their strengths and develop confidence as they start to collaborate and socialise with others.

Parents were aware of their child's engagement and growth through formal reports, phone calls and learning conversations.

Direction 2 Collaboratively develop and embed whole-school agreements with a commitment to quality differentiated teaching and learning, to engage all students.

Conditions for effective student learning

To what extent are all students, including aboriginal students and other priority groups, achieving in their learning?

Respectful relationships were evident between staff, students and families. A professional commitment to meet the diverse range of student learning needs was highly evident. Open Access educators are to be commended on their flexibility and persistence in building student engagement for vulnerable or geographically isolated children.

Student enrolment is carefully monitored with home visits strengthening the process where possible. The school is to be commended on the structured induction program they have established to build students skills and knowledge in readiness for entering an online learning environment. Student engagement and achievement is carefully monitored by the wellbeing, intervention, packaged programs and Aboriginal education teams. The teams were highly valued by all educators, although there was some clarification required as to which team or staff member teachers should go to for support.

Individual data is used to develop One Plans and Individual Learning Plans for every identified student, this occurs in consultation with parents and medical professionals where appropriate. Regular reviews of a young person's progress take place with responsive adjustments being made. The school is now well positioned to build on the effectiveness of each team through an increased level of focussed collaboration, building synergy.

A strong thread through the staff teams highlighted further training and development in cultural awareness and incorporating Aboriginal perspectives into the curriculum would ensure a responsive approach and enhance teaching and learning programs.

Limited social interaction due to geographic isolation or emotional needs was highlighted by some students and parents as a barrier to learning. The opportunities for face-to-face days were valued by families, with many hoping these events could increase in the future.

Parents described Open Access College as an environment in which their child was able to access a quality inclusive education. They valued that this option was available for their young person and commented on the depth of knowledge the teachers shared about their child appreciating the flexible approach.

Direction 3 Build synergy by developing structures and processes for the teams to work in collaboration to further ensure all students are achieving in their learning.

Outcomes of the External School Review 2021

Open Access College is a unique teaching and learning environment with a diverse range of students and programs operating state-wide. Programs are tailored to support students not able to engage with mainstream school, those committed to study one or more curriculum areas, those unable to access a local site due to geographic isolation and students who are studying a language with their class within a traditional setting.

Across the range of programs a high level of professionalism and a commitment to a cycle of continuous improvement exists.

Leaders and teachers are flexible, inclusive and responsive to ensure the best outcomes for each child within creative classrooms.

The Principal will work with the Education Director to implement the following directions:

- Direction 1** Further build on collaborative data analysis at the classroom and sub school level to evaluate the effectiveness of actions implemented and to set future direction.
- Direction 2** Collaboratively develop and embed whole-school agreements with a commitment to quality differentiated teaching and learning, to engage all students.
- Direction 3** Build synergy by developing structures and processes for the teams to work in collaboration to further ensure all students are achieving in their learning.

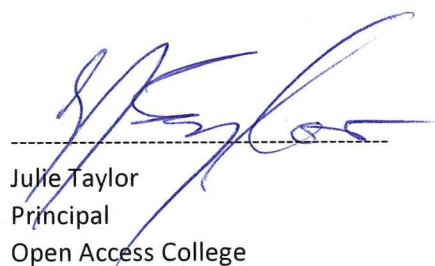
Based on the school's current performance, Open Access College will be externally reviewed again in 2024.



Kerry Dollman
Director
Review, Improvement and Accountability



Anne Millard
Executive Director
Partnerships, Schools and Preschools



Julie Taylor
Principal
Open Access College



Governing Council Chairperson

Appendix 1

School performance overview

The External School Review process includes an analysis of school performance as measured against the Department for Education Standard of Educational Achievement (SEA).

In considering the data below there needs to be some caution in making a judgement due to the continual enrolment process and the transient nature of the student cohort. There is generally a 50% change in student enrolments across the year, with only a small number engaging in the NAPLAN test.

In 2019, 13 Year 3, 14 year 5, 35 year 7 and 55 year 9 students sat the test.

Reading

In 2019 the reading results as measured by NAPLAN indicate that 62% of year 3 students, 36% of year 5 students, 31% of year 7 students and 35% of year 9 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA.

In relation to the historical baseline average this is an improvement for year 3 and a decline for years 5, 7 and 9.

Numeracy

In 2019 the numeracy results as measured by NAPLAN indicate that 54% of year 3 students, 36% of year 5 students, 31% of year 7 students and 33% of year 9 students demonstrated the expected achievement against the SEA.

In relation to the historical baseline average this is an improvement for year 3 and a decline for years 5, 7 and 9.

SACE

In terms of SACE completion in 2020, 32% of students enrolled in February and 95% of those enrolled in October, who had the potential to complete their SACE, did go on to successfully achieve SACE.

This result for October SACE completion represents little or no change from the historic baseline average.

For compulsory SACE Stage 1 and 2 subjects in 2020, 80% of students successfully completed their stage 1 personal learning plan, 78% of students successfully completed their stage 1 literacy units, 68% successfully completed their stage 1 numeracy units and 100% successfully completed their stage 2 Research Project.

For attempted stage 2 SACE subjects in 2020 94% of grades achieved were at 'C-' level or higher, 30% of grades were at an 'A' level and 40% of grades were at a 'B' level.

This result represents little or no change for the 'C-' level or higher grade, an improvement for the 'A' level grade and little or no change for the 'B' level grade from the historic baseline averages.

Forty six percent of students completed SACE using VET and there were 0 students enrolled in the Flexible Learning Options (FLO) program in 2020.

In terms of 2020 tertiary entrance, 48 out of 79 potential students achieved an ATAR or TAFE SA selection score. There were also 4 students who were successful in achieving a merit.

In 2020 the school had a moderation adjustment of -29.