

# Department for Education External School Review

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

## Report for Youth Education Centre

Conducted in September 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 Greg Graham, Review Officer of the department's Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate and Tanya Oshinsky, Review Principal.

## Review Process

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

- Presentation from the Principal
- 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

Youth Education Centre provides short to long term enrolment and learning experiences for secondary school aged students. The school currently comprises two sites, the Adelaide Youth Training Centre Kurlana Tapa – ‘New Path’(AYTC) and the Kilburn FlexiCentre.

The Youth Education Centre works collaboratively with the Department for Education to provide on-site learning opportunities to residents housed within the South Australian juvenile justice system. AYTC will become the only operating site in Adelaide to support youth within the system in the future. Kilburn Flexi Centre provides students and schools a Flexible Learning Options (FLO) learning program on a temporary enrolment basis. The student base comprises of students in years 10 to 12 from schools across the greater metropolitan area. The program is devised to support students who are unable to engage in traditional education programs in schools. Senior year students have a variety of South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) subjects on offer each semester, including Vocational Education and Training (VET) and Pathways, transition programs and workplace learning.

It is situated 14kms from the Adelaide CBD. The enrolment in 2021, as at the February census, is 89. Enrolment numbers change weekly. Enrolment at the time of the previous review was 42. The local partnership is Inner West.

The school has a 2020 ICSEA score of 1009 and is classified as Category 1 on the Department for Education Index of Educational Disadvantage.

The school leadership team consists of:

- Principal in their 1<sup>st</sup> year of tenure
- Deputy Principal and Head of Kilburn FlexiCentre in their 1<sup>st</sup> year of tenure
- Director of Learning in their 3<sup>rd</sup> year of tenure
- Head of Campus at Youth Justice Centre - Kurlana Tapa in their 3<sup>rd</sup> year of tenure
- Assistant Head of Campus at Youth Justice Centre - Kurlana Tapa in their 1<sup>st</sup> year of tenure

The school has 2 coordinators (Band 1 Leaders) as Transition and Pathways Coordinators

There are 15.8FTE teachers including 3 in the early years of their career and 7 teachers at the Step 9/AST 2 level. The school also recently appointed a 0.4FTE Occupational Therapist.

### The previous ESR or OTE directions were:

- Direction 1** Review current assessment practices and establish common assessment protocols so that whole-school improvement data over time can be used to inform cycles of site improvement.
- Direction 2** Ensure, through whole-school, evidence-based site improvement planning, that all teaching is increasingly purposeful and effective for more students more of the time.
- Direction 3** Strengthen evidence-based goal setting and review with all students to harness their agency in learning.
- Direction 4** Work actively to build collaboration between campuses and to harness whole-school teamwork in the interests of improving the efficacy of teaching practice, conducive to improved student learning outcomes.

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

- It was evident that there had been actions taken to address the previous External School Review directions; Termly individual assessment learning conversations with students and case manager
- The SACE professional learning team (PLT) have developed a teacher and student understanding of performance standards
- Teachers participated in online professional development and have applied this understanding to task design and assessment of student work
- SACE tracking and monitoring tool was created and housed SACE student data, student progress across the sites
- Learning Sprints focus on a facet of the School Improvement Plan (SIP) and maintain focus on improvement
- Individual student achievement data is analysed and shared amongst teachers, school support officers (SSOs) and leadership
- Teachers utilise Learning Intentions and Success Criteria in every lesson to support learning outcome, focus and action of students
- Teachers and case managers record notes on every student's application to learning (via OneNote)
- Case managers meet with students' daily/weekly to discuss educational goals and future learning direction
- Structured planning sessions have provided a medium for collaborative action and progressive direction for learning and assessment planning. Plans reflect curriculum that provides differentiated challenge appropriate to the needs of the student cohort
- Staff completed trauma-based training to improve teacher understanding of student needs to attend to emotional control before attending to education

The above comments have been verified from the staff survey conducted during the review. Elements of the previous directions may still need to be addressed and can be actioned in conjunction with the strategies identified in the school improvement plan.



## Lines of inquiry

### Effective school improvement planning

How effectively does the school use improvement planning processes to raise student achievement?

The Principal demonstrated a strategic long-term plan for the school, using the 3-year SIP as the foundation. The school is to be commended for the comprehensive processes used to ensure that all staff have collective ownership of and responsibility for school improvement planning. All staff have been involved in the SIP development and recognise the importance of the focus in improving teacher practice and student learning. The SIP focus on literacy and SACE with a particular focus on reading is well understood. Whole-school commitment is evident regarding the uptake of improvement processes.

Staff spoke favourably and respectfully of the leadership team, in driving improvement and support to enable teachers to direct their learning. Staff are collaborative, supportive, strongly committed and demonstrate a willingness to learn and embrace new challenges. Planning opportunities through team meetings to analyse achievement data and share expertise is evident. The introduction of learning sprints to enact SIP actions are used to drive the next steps in professional learning and student development. This is supported by referring to best practice papers to guide the learning focus with the intentional development of a common learning culture across the two sites, and to acknowledge and build on the successes of current practices.

The next steps to consider involve reflecting on the SIP, with the intent to further develop high impact teaching strategies (both face to face and online) as part of the challenge of practice. Continue to build teacher capacity through learning teams that reflect on the challenge of practice. Identify the most appropriate assessment measures to ensure appropriate achievement targets and SIP success criteria. Consider how the next SIP priorities will need to be more targeted to cater for potential growth in student enrolment. In strengthening the existing practice of involving all staff in the improvement cycle, the school will be well positioned to ensure quality teaching to impact on improved student learning.

**Direction 1** Further strengthen agreed SIP pedagogical actions that enable all teachers to effectively plan and consistently teach with high impact across the two school sites.

## Effective teaching and student learning

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

The staff have shown a collective commitment to having high expectations of students and developing quality teaching practices that will positively influence their learning. The leadership team provide extensive support towards developing these expectations and practices, which teachers appreciate. Collaborative professional learning teams (PLTs) demonstrate a collaborative approach amongst staff, who are committed and involved. The use of teacher 'pillars' to run the PLTs thus building leadership capacity is evident. The literacy focus has created a common goal for all and the professional development support is very intentional.

Teaching strengths include scaffolded and 'just in time teaching' to support learning, flexible ways of covering the curriculum based on individual student needs, and regular feedback and check-ins on student progress is evident. Differentiated approaches vary across the two campuses and are tailored for needs of the students at each campus. Integrated study units have been developed for year 10 students to support their pathway to Stage 1 & 2 SACE achievement.

Curriculum strengths include the attention to One Plan learning goal(s) for individual students and the building of relevant VET and short courses, all active based programs, has grown. The use of learning intention strategies to drive explicit learning and individual goals for each student is highly evident. Assessment tools and the shared storage of student information and teaching strategies is readily available for all staff to access.

Aboriginal cultural awareness programs are evident and relevant for Aboriginal and Torrens Strait Islander (ATSI) and non ATSI students. Students are involved in hands-on learning with links to cultural respect and responsibilities. Retention and attendance of students have increased in these programs and are supported by a strong ATSI teaching team who have a clear vision for further improvement.

The next steps to consider include revisiting the formative assessment strategies through professional development in PLTs to confirm a collective understanding of how each stage supports the range of learning, how the regular formative testing influences any modifications to lesson planning. Consider how the One-Note information can be further developed to include measurable engagement and achievement outcomes. Further exploration of online resources includes 'flipped classroom' strategies where students can access videos made by staff demonstrating lessons or concepts. Reviewing and updating of the curriculum agreements will strengthen teacher practice and enhance congruency with the challenges of practice and actions.

**Direction 2** To meet the learning needs of all students, ensure that teachers consistently plan differentiated teaching opportunities that includes the formative assessment cycle to provide scaffolded 'stretch' in their learning.

## Effective school improvement planning

To what extent do teachers ensure that students have authentic influence in their learning?

All staff recognise the importance of building relationships with each student as paramount to maximising wellbeing and learning for every student. The Student Representative Council (SRC) indicated that they like the 'family orientated nature' of the school and staff.

All staff identified strategies for the differentiated approaches that they apply in their classes which cater for the specific learning needs of each student. Feedback strategies for teachers varied across the school with most using conferencing as the main approach. Other strategies include peer feedback, self-review, random check-ins, and formative/summative results.

The students are consulted about curriculum/subject options and choices. The students were very clear in understanding that learning intentions help them achieve or consolidate new learning. This was generally seen through their summative test result.

Student voice is apparent within classrooms and via a SRC group and they recognise and appreciate the use of a process ('Dear Dan letter') to express their concerns and requests. The students respect and value the fact that their voice is listened to and actioned upon.

The use of student leaders to introduce new enrolments to the school and the use of 'their story' to connect with them was identified as a valuable process. The students highlighted that learning is done with respect and that the learning environment has an expectation of doing the work without pressure.

The next steps to consider include teachers building on the learning needs of all students and ensuring that they consistently plan differentiated teaching opportunities to provide students with a stronger connection to 'stretch' their learning. Ensure that there is reflection time allocated to consolidate the learning intention along with the regular check-ins and student self-assessment strategies to enable the teachers to adjust lesson focus if needed.

Consider how teachers can involve the students in the construction of learning rubrics as 'shared planners' in their learning. This may include strategies to enable students to be informed about the 'learning journey' to assist with their personalised learning, learning intentions, goal setting and the end product (e.g., SACE credits).

**Direction 3     Develop student agency in the co-design of learning, including formative assessment and feedback practices, to enable students to benchmark and understand next steps for their learning**

# Outcomes of the External School Review 2021

The panel recognised the complexity of the school and the teaching and learning along with the numerous obstacles in working across two government departments. The work of the Principal and staff in building the changes to the learning environment in a relatively short period of time was also noted by the panel. The teacher and leader practice are positively impacted by effective systems that build capacity. Students are provided opportunities and scaffolds that enable them to authentically influence their learning. The higher emphasis on a 'culture of learning' was evident across the two campuses.

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

- Direction 1** Further strengthen agreed SIP pedagogical actions that enable all teachers to effectively plan and consistently teach with high impact across the two school sites.
- Direction 2** To meet the learning needs of all students, ensure that teachers consistently plan differentiated teaching opportunities that includes the formative assessment cycle to provide scaffolded 'stretch' in their learning.
- Direction 3** Develop student agency in the co-design of learning, including formative assessment and feedback practices, to enable students to benchmark and understand next steps for their learning

Based on the school's current performance, Youth Education Centre will be externally reviewed again in 2024.



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# 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 low numbers represented in the student cohorts at the school. This is done for two reasons: to overcome the anomalies that may occur in any one year and to minimise the possibility of identifying individuals in any small cohort of students.

The data below represents a summary of the aggregated data from Youth Education Centre from 2016-2019.

### **SACE**

SACE results for YEC are distorted due to the unique enrolment processes and student attendance requirement. YEC Kilburn campus is a FLO enrolment school (temporary). This means all SACE resulted student data returns to the student enrolment school (active enrolment site).

The majority of KTYIC enrolled students are not with the school for enough time to complete SACE accredited subjects

There were 72 students enrolled in the Flexible Learning Options (FLO) program in 2020. These students exited and entered the program at various times.

In terms of 2020 tertiary entrance, no students achieved an ATAR score. No students were successful in achieving a merit.

In 2020, the school had a moderation adjustment of -2 for Research Project A.

