

External School Review

Urrbrae Agricultural High School

Final School Summary Report

May 2023



External School 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 our schools.

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

This summary 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 summary report.

Round table participants

David Price	A/Principal
Linda Richardson	Education Director
Simon Harding	Review Officer

Review team

Simon Harding	Review Officer
Rebecca Moore	Review Principal
Tony Hall	Review Principal
Anthony Van Ruiten	Review Principal

Post review meeting participants

Joslyn Fox	Principal
Linda Richardson	Education Director
Simon Harding	Review Officer

Process

The following processes were used to gather evidence relevant to the Lines of Inquiry:

- Principal/leadership focused walkthrough
- Leadership discussion
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander team forum
- School Services Officer (SSO) forum
- Variety of teacher forums
- Student forums
- Class visits
- Curriculum documentation
- Parent forum with governing council representation including the governing council chair
- Examination of an extensive range of school documentation including a comprehensive overview of the processes used to develop and embed effective school improvement planning across the site.

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

The site improvement plan guides the improvement work across the school. Collective understanding of the plan has been built over time and the school has worked with staff and developed processes which involve staff in the implementation of the actions in the plan. A small group of staff have volunteered to participate as part of committee with leaders to monitor and evaluate the progress of the plan. Learning area leaders ensure that site improvement plan actions are reviewed as part of faculty meetings on a regular basis. Relevant data sets are used to inform goal setting. Staff have been involved in building their understanding of their responsibilities when implementing actions aligned to the plan.

Leadership have led evidence-based improvements in teaching through the promotion of school wide use of high impact teaching strategies. All middle leaders have undertaken training to support them to effectively utilize the expected strategies, learning intentions and success criteria and differentiation outlined in the site improvement plan. The school has offered targeted professional learning on differentiated approaches to teaching. All teachers have had access to this learning.

There has been a collective leadership approach to build teacher capability to examine and use data to be more responsive to the needs of students in their planning for learning. The PIVOT survey where teachers are seeking feedback from students to influence teacher practice has had a significant uptake in participation by teachers.

The school stated there is limited evidence of developing practices in student agency. Staff and leaders have had discussions about how this could be implemented but as yet this has not translated in to quantifiable practice.

Expert teaching line of inquiry: How effectively are teachers analysing assessment and feedback data to inform differentiated curriculum planning and instruction to improve outcomes?

Strengths and challenges

- Most students talked about processes of submitting draft work for feedback and its value. There is variance in the use of this process across the school. When feedback is provided by teachers it often includes both positive and constructive comments to improve. Students stated there is still variance in the quality and timeliness of feedback they receive and they are seeking increased feedback to improve their work. This is an area for growth.
- The school has undertaken extensive work on seeking feedback from students using the PIVOT tool over several years. Teachers receive individual feedback. Collated faculty and whole school feedback is analysed. Teachers have elected to be part of this process and there has been significant uptake. The school has identified that a next step is to establish processes where teachers share this information with students. Most students stated that they have limited awareness that the information they provide is influencing teaching and learning. Using this information to inform teaching practice is an opportunity.
- The reporting processes to parents about their child's learning progress is valued. They understand that feedback is provided through the learner management system and they can access information on the portal. The information provided at parent discussions is informative of their child's progress.
- There is evidence of a few teachers using formative assessment tasks to inform next steps in learning. There are some faculties using assessments to level students into advanced, general and foundation/essential groupings to target the learning. Students and parents value this strategy. During class visits there were limited examples of differentiation in the learning being offered to students. This continues to be an area of growth.
- During class visits there was evidence of teachers using explicit teaching. In the SIP learning intentions are explicitly stated as a strategy for teachers to use as a HIT strategy however they were not visible in classrooms and in student discussions they couldn't confirm these are being used. Developing processes which provide all leaders with a clear line of sight of the effective implementation of expected practices/HITs is an opportunity.
- Most students stated that rubrics and exemplars are provided to support the intended learning. However they said that often these are not explained / unpacked so they can have limited impact on improving outcomes. There were some teachers who provided examples of using an exemplar for peer assessment and improving student understanding of the elements needed to be successful. Opportunities for students to be active participants in self and peer assessment/feedback is an area of growth.
- Moderation processes in faculties is reliant on informal discussions between colleagues. There are teachers who are seeking opportunities to participate in more formal processes with common summative tasks to build consistency of judgement across groups of teachers. Formalising regular processes for teachers to moderate assessment of learning tasks is an opportunity.
- Teachers talked about using their own pre assessment data and one plans, for relevant students, to inform planning. Leadership stated that all teachers have had training using Power BI and teachers are expected to use this to investigate the data. There was limited evidence in teacher discussions about how they are using this resource/data and concerns around accessing this information to inform planning.

Potential next steps

- (Strengthening collective, school wide processes and expectations to build teacher capability to provide students with effective feedback to support students to achieve improved learning outcomes)
- Strengthen school wide practices and expectations for the collective use of success criteria/rubrics which support students to self and peer assess and improve outcomes for students
- Build teacher capability to effectively analyse and use feedback from students to inform changes in their practice to engage students in learning.
- Build collective teacher capability in formative assessment processes aligned to learning intentions to support students in their next steps in learning.
- Establish clear school wide expectations and practices which support teachers to use data to inform planning for the diversity of students with whom they work.
- Formalise regular opportunities for teachers to moderate assessment of learning tasks

Direction 1 **Establish clear school wide expectations and build teacher capability in formative assessment practices to inform planning and support students to identify their next steps in learning.**

Quality leadership line of inquiry: How effective are the school's professional learning and performance development processes in building teacher capability to accelerate student learning?

Strengths and challenges

- Evidence of teachers valuing the existing expertise of their colleagues. They willingly share resources, informally observe each other's practice and work collaboratively for their own professional development and support with current challenges.
- There are expectations from leadership for PDPs to include a SIP priority as a goal. Performance meetings are held twice a year and feedback is provided. There was no evidence of formal walk throughs or observations being conducted to improve practice aligned to the SIP priorities and measuring the impact of the professional learning undertaken. This is an area for growth.
- The panel noted that line management of teachers could be optimized through the use of all leaders and consistent scaffolds providing the opportunity to increase the rigour of the PDP process.
- Teachers stated leadership encourage them to attend professional learning of personal relevance which is not necessarily to the SIP priorities which has been valued. Often this learning is shared with other staff. Continuing to strengthen a strategic approach to professional learning to benefit SIP priorities is an area of growth.
- Teachers demonstrated an understanding that professional learning and its implementation into practice is critical to improve learning for students. There is evidence of whole school learning aligned to differentiation in the SIP however collective understanding is still evolving.
- There are informal opportunities for teachers to seek and provide for mentoring and coaching particularly within faculties. The panel heard evidence of team teaching, constructive conversation and curriculum and task design.
- Professional Urrbrae Development sessions are planned for whole school learning twice a term. These sessions are designed for teachers to share their expertise and engage in learning aligned to the SIP, agriculture and wellbeing. There is an expectation that teachers participate in the three strands over the year. Continuing to build the strategic intent of this learning is an opportunity.
- There are expectations that faculty leaders include the monitoring of SIP actions as standing items at each faculty meeting. Agenda and minutes of each meeting are shared with the principal which informs the annual report and step 4 and 5 of the SIP process. Continuing to strengthen the role of the SIP committee in the ongoing monitoring the implementation of the actions and their impact on learning and build teacher connectedness is an area for growth.
- To build teacher capability and collective understanding the ATSI team reported that aboriginal perspectives and individual student wellbeing are standing agenda items at faculty and year level meetings. There has been a significant increase in staff participation on the RAP committee suggesting greater staff interest in supporting ATSI students in their learning
- A strength of the implementation of the PIVOT tool is the significant voluntary uptake by teachers to seek feedback from students about their classroom experience. Some teachers could talk about how this feedback has impacted on their teaching practice. Continuing to strengthen the consistent and purposeful use of this information to improve teacher practice which is evident for students, is an area for growth.

Potential next steps

- Build increased rigour into performance processes with a focus on data informed practice and observations and feedback of teacher practice.
- Strengthen the strategic approach to professional learning which is aligned to SIP priorities, making explicit the implementation of the learning and evaluation of the impact of actions taken
- Strengthen the consistent and purposeful use of student feedback to improve teacher practice
- Continuing to strengthen collective understanding and practice to effectively differentiate learning to engage and challenge students.

Direction 2 Build rigour into performance development processes, focusing on data informed practice and making explicit the implementation and evaluation of the actions taken, aligned to the site priorities.

Conditions for optimal learning line of inquiry: To what extent does the school promote, maintain and monitor a culture of learning and high expectations of achievement for all learners?

Strengths and challenges

- It is evident there is a positive culture and professional trust existing across the site. The unique and diverse opportunities provided are greatly valued, generating a high level of connectedness and belonging across all stakeholders.
- Teachers talked about the collegiality that exists both in faculties and more broadly. They are willing to share practice and resources as evidenced through conducting and participating in Professional Urrbrae Development sessions run twice a term and informal collaboration.
- Whilst not explicitly stated, the values are enacted in the relationships and behaviours of staff and students.
- There is a level of commitment and professional investment demonstrated by staff which reflects high expectations for their professional practices. Continuing to develop consistent monitoring and evaluation processes of the impact of the actions taken to improve practice is an opportunity.
- Students reported that often challenge arose from managing the quantity of work rather than through learning design. They are seeking opportunities for increased challenge in their learning. While the school is providing targeted levels in particular curriculum areas (advance, standard, foundation), an opportunity exists to continue to focus on differentiation to provide challenge more broadly in the Australian Curriculum to best meet the learning needs of all students.
- School performance evidence indicates a three year improvement in year 9 higher band achievement in reading however in numeracy there has been a three year decline in higher band achievement. SEA achievement in reading, writing and numeracy has been maintained. Stage 2 SACE achievement has been maintained over time.
- Over several years students reported, through the PIVOT survey, the desire to experience greater levels of engagement in their learning. The panel saw high levels of student compliance during classroom visits and leadership walkthroughs. Continuing to work towards learning design that promotes higher levels of student engagement is an opportunity.
- There is a high level of engagement with the community, inclusive of old scholars' networks and industry partners, which provide improved learning opportunities for students, particularly through the agricultural focus.
- Parents are connected to the school and to the learning. They have opportunity to access their child's progress through the learner management system, but also appreciate direct communication through email and phone calls. The parents valued the passion and respect the teachers and leaders have for their child and their learning.
- Staff display a commitment and responsibility to improve outcomes for all students. Some staff are utilising the identified HITS within the SIP. An opportunity exists to use the current expertise to increase the effective and consistent use of HITS more broadly across the school.
- Most students stated they have an understanding of where they are with their learning, particularly through the feedback provided. Additional sharing of achievement data with students could further support students in identifying next steps in learning.
- Governing Council report that their feedback and opinions are valued by leadership and this information informs decision making. A recent example was related to uniform changes where the governing council developed a survey for parents and then collated information from all stakeholders to inform the decision which was taken.

Potential next steps

- Continue to build common understandings and practices in differentiation to target the learning and improve outcomes and engagement for students.
- Continue to strengthen the use of data with students to support them to identify their next steps in learning
- Strengthen the use of student feedback to inform teacher practices and effectively build engagement in learning
- Strengthen the explicit use of the expected high impact teaching strategies, using the existing expertise, to support students more effectively in their learning.

Direction 3 Strengthen the explicit use of the expected high impact teaching strategies, using the existing expertise, to support differentiation in planning and student learning and engagement.

Summative comments

Students and parents reported that Urrbrae Agricultural High School has supportive and approachable teachers. Parents value the flexible options and range of learning experiences which enhance their child's growth as a learner. Students are articulate and compliant in their learning. They are seeking increased engagement in learning as evidenced in the PIVOT survey and opportunities to be challenged as they understand this is important for their development. This provides great potential to increase student achievement and engagement through increasing student ownership of their learning. Staff are working towards providing quality learning for students. While many teachers willingly participate in informal processes to support effective collaboration and sharing of practice, strengthening formal structures to improve practice more broadly is a next step. There is a strong sense of connectedness and belonging across the school and leaders continue to build and maintain a collective culture for continuous improvement across all stakeholders.

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

- Direction 1** **Establish clear school wide expectations and build teacher capability in formative assessment practices to inform planning and support students to identify their next steps in learning.**

- Direction 2** **Build rigour into performance development processes, focusing on data informed practice and making explicit the implementation and evaluation of the actions taken, aligned to the site priorities.**

- Direction 3** **Strengthen the explicit use of the expected high impact teaching strategies, using the existing expertise, to support differentiation in planning and student learning and engagement.**

Based on the school's current performance, Urrbrae Agricultural High School will be externally reviewed again in 2026.

Simon Harding
Review Officer
Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate
May 2023

