

# Department for Education External School Review

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

## Report for Marryatville High School

Conducted in November 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 Lia Tedesco and Richard Abell, Review Principals.

## Review Process

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

- Presentation from the Principal and Leadership team.
- Class visits
- Attendance at professional meeting
- Document analysis
- Discussions with:
  - Governing Council representatives
  - Leaders
  - Parent groups
  - School Services Officers (SSOs)
  - Student representatives
  - Teachers.

## School context

Marryatville High School caters for young people from years 8 to 12. It is situated 4kms from the Adelaide CBD. The enrolment in 2021, as at the February census, is 1383. Enrolment at the time of the previous review was 1250. The local partnership is Central East.

The school is classified as Category 6 on the Department for Education Index of Educational Disadvantage.

The school population includes less than 5% Aboriginal students, less than 5% students with disabilities, less than 5% students with English as an additional language or dialect (EALD) background, less than 6 young people in care and 13% students eligible for School Card assistance.

The school leadership team consists of a Principal in their 5<sup>th</sup> year of tenure and:

- Band 6 Deputy Principal
- Band 5 Head of Music
- Band 4 Director of Teaching and Learning
- Band 4 Director of Wellbeing
- Band 3 Director of Middle School
- Band 3 Director of Innovative Technologies
- Band 3 Director of Organisation and Systems.

There are an additional 20 leaders with responsibility for year levels, wellbeing, and specific subject areas.

There are 64 Teachers including 10 in the early years of their career and 41 Step 9 Teachers.

### The previous ESR or OTE directions were:

- Direction 1** Establish a whole-school culture where Marryatville High School is recognized in the wider community as a school of excellence because of the opportunities provided for all students to develop their capabilities as critical and creative thinkers, quality communicators confident problem solvers, risk takers and entrepreneurs.
- Direction 2** Build leadership capacity to effectively and cohesively implement the school's systems, and achieve the improvement targets, as articulated in the annual Site Improvement Plan and new 4-year Strategic Plan.
- Direction 3** Provide relevant data sets on the school's Learner management System, and provide targeted opportunities in the Professional Learning calendar, so that all teachers analyse and use data to ensure every student is engaged and challenged to achieve his or her potential, and this analysis is incorporated into the schools Performance Development Program.

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

There has been a significant focus on improving the clarity across the school of what is to be collectively achieved, with clear documentation and strategic processes in place. Leadership capacity has been strengthened. New structures and systems have been put in place with roles and responsibilities adjusted reflecting an alignment between leadership and effective teaching and learning.

The school is recognised by parents as a school of excellence with a new purpose, vision and set of values in place. Students have been involved in the co-construction of the school values. In attending to culture, Aboriginal perspectives and the Kurna language are increasingly being embedded across teaching and learning, whole-school events and wellbeing programs.

In response to the third direction, data systems have been reviewed with a sophisticated learner management system focusing on developing a continuous feedback loop. The analysis of personalised student data will be further strengthened in 2022.

## 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?

All teachers and leaders at Marryatville High School have high expectations for student achievement.

The Power BI teacher application, data overview, data protocols and the Daymap charter are excellent documents and tools. They have been strategically developed to provide an increased level of access to individual, cohort, class, and whole-school data for both teachers and leaders. Leaders are articulate about and analyse student achievement, attendance, and wellbeing data to set goals and targets for improvement. The school is well positioned and has intentionally planned to fully engage all teachers with the Power BI teacher application enabling them to effectively use data to inform their practice. Building teacher capacity in and providing structured times for deep analysis of multiple data sets and targeted differentiation will further leverage achievement for all students.

The wellbeing team have pro-actively gathered data from primary schools and are using it in the formation of classes for the 530 new students enrolled for 2022. Data analysis has enabled the team to identify those students who may require additional support or targeted intervention, with this information to be shared with their new teachers.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and the Flexible Learning Options team are analysing data weekly to monitor the achievement, wellbeing, and attendance of their students. They identify any students who may be at risk of non-completion and use a 'team around the child' approach to work with mainstream teachers to develop strategies of support.

An extensive curriculum review has taken place and the new 'Marryatville Model' has been collaboratively developed using evidence-based research. The model is a comprehensive document outlining the school vision, purpose, values, pedagogical frameworks, and curriculum. Teachers articulated that this will be a significant area of focus for 2022 and reported they were positive about the challenge. One teacher quoted, "We are more on the same page than we have ever been before", and this was confirmed by others.

**Direction 1      Build teacher capacity to effectively analyse cohort and individual student data to ensure targeted teaching with personalised differentiation that moves learning forward for every child.**

## Effective teaching and student learning

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

Literacy has been a key focus area of professional development with external and internal expertise used to build teacher capacity. All staff have completed a four-module literacy course and explicit instruction of functional grammar is being used as a lever to develop quality writers at the school.

Teachers have explored texts of different standards and identified descriptors to support students in identifying the steps required to improve their writing to an A grade level. Literacy champions have volunteered to trial the new approach and reported students are proud of their writing and more engaged in the task. Teachers identified they now have greater depth of language knowledge and skills in the teaching genre across curriculum areas. Across faculties teachers were articulate when describing how their professional development has impacted positively on classroom practice and student outcomes.

The school purpose of learning, living and growing embraces a pedagogical framework of engaging, exploring, explaining, elaborating, and evaluating. The framework and supportive resources enable every student to be empowered through learning. Teachers have been consulted during its development and embedding this framework across all curriculum areas has been identified as the next step for 2022.

Some teachers gave strong examples of using formative assessment and were able to describe how their thinking has evolved because of professional development. The panel observed peer feedback, questioning techniques, conferencing, and group construction of a task with opportunities for reflection during classroom observations. The school is now well positioned to embed formative assessment across all classrooms by supporting teachers to develop their capacity to gather evidence about what students know, understand, and can do prior to and during learning.

Most staff have completed the Classroom Management and Engagement Strategies (CMES) training, with observation and feedback integral to their learning. Staff highly valued the feedback they had received and saw this program as a key to helping them become reflective practitioners. Effective conditions for learning were evident across classrooms.

**Direction 2      Develop a whole-school understanding of and build teacher capacity in using formative assessment to move individual learning forward for every student.**

## Effective leadership

How effectively does the school leadership ensure a clear focus on improving teaching and student learning?

The roles and responsibilities of all leaders are documented and clearly understood by all staff. They are strategically structured to focus on whole-school improvement. Specialist music and tennis pathways are highly valued and supported with leadership time and expertise to continue their programs of excellence. Parents were overwhelmingly supportive of the dedication of leaders at the school and both students and staff reported leaders were positive, cohesive, and respectful. A culture of trust and mutual support is evident.

Building leadership capacity is a strength. There is a strong commitment to raise the potential of all staff to contribute towards achieving the school's priorities with a range of opportunities for teachers to lead teaching and learning. The school has recently introduced an Aspiring Leaders program where teachers can apply for release to undertake a targeted project aligned to whole-school improvement.

School leadership have worked diligently over the past three years to collaboratively create the current vision, purpose, and values of the Marryatville Model across classrooms and within the specialist programs. There has been a significant change of agenda in the creation of a new model. Consolidation is now highlighted as the next phase by both leaders and teachers. The school is well positioned to further build the capacity of all leaders as they work with their respective teams to embed the new learning at the classroom level.

Students and staff highly value the new house system which creates a spirit of fun and comradery through inter-house competition. Students articulated the house system combined with the wellbeing hubs has provided positive connections and new friendships across year levels. The school is to be commended on the excellent, in depth work around wellbeing. Students have leadership opportunities through a range of recognised leadership roles and portfolios including wellbeing, improving learning, house culture, leadership, and school environment. Senior students can volunteer to act as mentors for younger students and student voice was valued by all stakeholders across the school community.

**Direction 3      Through the new model continue to build leadership opportunities, skills and density with a clear focus on embedding improved teaching and learning across the school.**

# Outcomes of the External School Review 2021

Marryatville High School has a strong focus on continual improvement. The staff are to be commended on their balanced commitment to both academic excellence and student wellbeing, evident in their vision of thriving today, transforming tomorrow. The school community is fostering a culture where Kurna language and Aboriginal perspectives are embedded, this is to be highly commended. The values of kindness, achievement, respect, resilience and accountability are based on the Kurna word KARRA, meaning red gum, linking with the trees in the school's physical setting. Students articulated about the school's focus on Kurna language and culture and had a strong sense of pride towards how it was being embedded through their year 7/8 transition, music, and curriculum programs.

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

- Direction 1**    **Build teacher capacity to effectively analyse cohort and individual student data to ensure targeted teaching with personalised differentiation that moves learning forward for every child.**
- Direction 2**    **Develop a whole-school understanding of and build teacher capacity in using formative assessment to move individual learning forward for every student.**
- Direction 3**    **Through the new model continue to build leadership opportunities, skills and density with a clear focus on embedding improved teaching and learning across the school.**

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



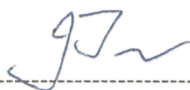
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