

Peer Review Report

St Albans Heights Primary School

South Western Victoria Region

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| School number: | 4948 |
| Principal: | Helen Otway |
| School Council President: | Yoko Ahkuoi |
| Review Company: | Ed Solutions |
| Accredited School Reviewer: | Lisa Sperling |
| Peers: | Heather Carr Lynn Davie Catriona Salt (SEIL) |
| Date of Review Meeting: | 30 November 2015 |

Peer Review Report Summary

Executive Summary

2. 1 School Context

St Albans Heights Primary School is a well-established school in the western suburbs of Melbourne in the Keilor /St Albans network. It is close to the local secondary school and kindergartens. The school has landscaped gardens, soft rubberised play areas and playgrounds and sandpits which are covered in shade cloth, a full sized basketball stadium, an art room, science room, Community Hub, vegetable garden and purpose built oral language play centre.

St. Albans Heights Primary School's vision is to embrace the diversity of the community providing a safe and rich learning environment where quality programs enable students to achieve their full potential.

The school population is multicultural with over 31 different home languages with 87% from a Language Background Other Than English. There is a well-established Vietnamese community and recent growth in the number of Pasifika and Indian students. The number of Sudanese and other African communities has declined. Mobility of the student population is around 7%-8% and enrolment numbers have been increasing since 2012, with numbers fluctuating at around 269 in October 2015. The Student Family Occupation index is 0.86 which means that there are high levels of disadvantage.

Currently there are thirteen classes, two Foundations, four 1/2s, four 3/4s, and three 5/6s. Most of the classroom spaces are open double rooms, which allows for team teaching. The classrooms are equipped with whiteboards, display areas and the interactive whiteboards have been complemented with Apple TVs and mobile screens. The F-2 classes have a 1:1 iPad Program and the 3-6 classes have access to newly purchased MacBook Airs and a small set of iPads. The technology in the school has been updated in 2015 to cater for more interactive learning within flexible learning spaces.

The leadership team includes the Principal, Assistant Principal and two Leading Teachers. There are the equivalent of 18.3 classroom teachers. The school employs the following education support staff: Speech pathologist 0.4, Multicultural Education Aide 0.5, Library 0.8, Technician 1.0, Primary Welfare 0.8, Community Hub Leader 0.7 and Canteen 0.26.

St Albans Heights delivers a comprehensive learning program with a strong focus on literacy and numeracy, with increased hands-on and experiential approaches to support English as an Additional Language (EAL) students. In 2015 the school developed its team teaching model to best support a collaborative approach to learning and teaching, and to strengthen differentiation, lesson design and instruction. Specialist programs in physical education and arts run across the school. A Japanese program has been introduced in years F-2 and will move into 3-6 in 2016. A specialist science program is currently offered to years 3-6. The Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program provides added hands on experiences to the EAL students and complements the science and "Play and Say" program.

A Community Hub program is facilitated by the Smith Family and funded by the Scanlon Foundation and Federal government. The Community Hub Leader supports families transitioning into the local area and connecting with school life. This community hub also provides programs for families and their toddlers, including playgroups and adult English classes.

2.2 Summary of the School's Performance

2.2.1 The School's Performance against the Previous Strategic Plan

Over the period of the last strategic plan 2012-2015 the school sought to have continuous improvement in all dimensions of literacy and numeracy. Student learning and achievement has been strong and comparable to similar schools. There have been year level cohort variations across the period. Reading outcomes were strong, with year levels showing more than 20% of students working above the expected level. Measurement and geometry, and number and algebra outcomes were the next strongest with most years showing more than 20% of students working above the expected level. The levels of achievement in writing and numeracy are not as strong as in reading. Therefore, these two areas will be foci for the new strategic planning period including research into developing improved numeracy and writing assessments and agreed teaching practices. The panel agreed that the analysis of the student achievement data highlights the need to lift the performance of all students particularly those capable of achieving above the expected levels.

The school reports that there are several main factors that have particularly impacted teaching and learning at St Albans Heights Primary School over the strategic plan period. The school has recently developed a team teaching model to support a collaborative approach to learning and teaching, and to strengthen differentiation, professional development, lesson design and instruction. Team teaching has allowed teachers to learn from each other in a meaningful and contextual manner, by modelling, observing and giving feedback to the teaching partner on an ongoing basis. Teachers plan lessons together in teams after gathering base-line data through pre-tests or observations. The data is interrogated to identify the range of entry levels for the students and to uncover any gaps or misconceptions. The development and articulation of clear learning intentions and success criteria have helped to make learning more visible for the students.

A combined student engagement and wellbeing goal was designed in the School Strategic Plan. The school sought to strengthen students' engagement in their personal learning and their interaction with the school community and to provide a seamless transition from years F-6 to support student learning. Progress has been made towards this aspirational goal. Feedback from students indicates student engagement (stimulating learning measure) has improved over the review period. The target to maintain the high levels of school connectedness in the Parent Opinion survey was also met. The staff opinion survey was changed in 2014 and measures were not comparable. However the overall score for school climate measures is very close to the state with above state scores in the measures of collective focus on student learning, guaranteed and viable curriculum staff trust in colleagues and collective responsibility. The school did not set a target to improve attendance. Average days absent per student F-6 remains just above the state. The school has improved student engagement through more personalised learning in the core curriculum and the inquiry learning process with more hands on learning approaches. There is also a diverse specialist program.

Productivity goals were not required in the strategic plan however School Council and the leadership team have been pro-active in ensuring sound resource management to support the achievement of the school's goals. This is evident in the improved amenity of learning environments, curriculum resources, staffing, provision of literacy support and community engagement.

2.2.2 Summary of the considerations for the next Strategic Plan

The School Self-Evaluation and panel day discussions examined the school's performance and achievement and made suggestions for goal development and key improvement strategies in the four areas of student achievement, student engagement, student wellbeing and productivity.

Student achievement

The panel recommended the school continues to build a culture of professionalism, coaching and accountability so that teams are focussed to collaborate and plan for high quality instruction and student learning across the school. Future improvement strategies suggested include continuing to build excellence in curriculum planning, teacher practice including skill in assessment and using data to plan differentiated teaching and learning opportunities.

Data suggests that a clear focus on meeting the personalised learning needs of each student and achieving expected learning growth or greater for students will be key to improving student performance. The successful research-based process that has been used for personalising and improving student performance in reading is suggested as a model to develop whole school agreed best practices for writing and the dimensions in mathematics with number being a first priority. Documenting clear, agreed expectations for what we teach, how we teach (research based), how we assess and give feedback to students and parents for all areas of the curriculum with a focus initially on numeracy and writing is suggested.

Learning growth will be enhanced as the school embeds research-based and consistent whole school agreed classroom teaching and learning practices together with strong accountability. Ensuring a whole school approach to the use of evidence and data to inform teaching and the tracking of the learning growth for every student is an important part of this process.

Student engagement

The Student Attitudes to School survey data suggests an improvement in student engagement in learning. This is an area for continuing improvement. A goal for all students to be confident, motivated and challenged is suggested. To support the goal key strategies include developing a whole school approach and opportunities for students to give and receive feedback, to set individual goals, to reflect, and evaluate their learning. Providing opportunities for all students to develop confidence and leadership skills is also suggested.

Student wellbeing

If there is a whole school focus on fostering student wellbeing and building student's personal and interpersonal skills then social skills, resilience and wellbeing will be enhanced. The suggested goal is to foster a cohesive school learning community where every student thrives and feels safe and connected. The key strategy to achieve this is to develop and integrate a consistent whole school approach to wellbeing.

Productivity

A goal was suggested to enhance the human and physical resources in order to strengthen the school's teaching and learning culture. If there is strong aligned focus on resourcing to achieve the goals of the strategic plan then learning and development of every student will be enhanced. Strategies include prioritising the building and optimising of resources through investment in professional learning and developing and implementing a leadership structure aligned to the strategic priorities.

2.2.3 Next steps

The review day was marked by quality robust discussions and evident enthusiasm to continue the right work for school improvement in the next strategic plan period 2016-2019. The St Albans Heights Primary School community is in an excellent position to build on the impressive learning community it is today. Building on the successful collaborative culture and embedding research-based whole school teaching and learning practices will ensure strong learning growth for each student within an engaging and caring environment.

Appendix 1: Focus of the Review: Terms of Reference and Methodology

Focus for the Peer Review: Terms of Reference and Methodology

1.1 Terms of Reference

The 2015 Peer Review for St Albans Heights Primary will explore the school's performance in the key areas of student achievement, student engagement in learning, student wellbeing and productivity. The following questions arising from the School Self Evaluation will be discussed in-depth:

Achievement

To what extent is there an effective transition for students through the school with shared data, sequential curriculum and consistent whole school pedagogy?

Wellbeing

To what extent are there consistent school-wide practices and procedures?

Engagement

To what extent does the school challenge and stimulate students and encourage student voice in their learning?

Productivity

How effective is our resource management in improving student outcomes?

1.2 Methodology

Timeline for the Peer Review

| Date | Activity | Action Officer |
|--------------------------|--|--|
| 10 March | Peer Review Training | Principal 2 x Assistant Principals |
| 14 April | Staff PL – Annual Report for 2014 and comparison to 2013 | Principal |
| 1 May | Initial planning for the review – including timelines | Principal |
| 2 and 17 September | Preparation of self-evaluation report using data sets and collated feedback | Principal Assistant Principal Leading Teachers |
| August – Nov | Policy reviews in teams and at staff meetings | Principal Assistant Principal Leading Teachers |
| 13 th October | Self-evaluation shared and discussed in teams for staff PL. Feedback given and collated. | Principal Assistant Principal Leading Teachers |
| 19 October | Self-evaluation shared with school council | Principal |
| 4 November | Collating policies and evidence | Principal Assistant Principal Leading Teachers |
| 18 November | VRQA policy check and TOR development | Principal Assistant Principal Leading Teachers |
| 20 November | Sharing of data with peers | Principal |
| 30 November | Panel Day | All |
| 1 December | Debrief with staff | Principal Staff member from each session |
| 14 December | Presentation to staff Presentation to school council | Principal Assistant Principal Leading Teachers parent |

Panel Day Plan

| Time | Activities | Attendees |
|-------------|---|---|
| 9.00-9.15 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction and overview for the day • Terms of Reference | Helen Otway (Prin) Gail Pomfret (AP) |
| 9.15-11.00 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student achievement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Student achievement data ➤ Discussion of self-evaluation and findings ➤ Teaching and learning practice ➤ Terms of Reference (TOR) focus | Hayriye Ali (F-2 LT) Bec Bubeck (3-6 LT) Jo Dalton (3/4TL) Sandy Wilson (RR) Marta Rodrigues (5/6) Rofiqul Islam (parent) Heather Carr (peer) Lynn Davie (peer) Cat Salt (SEIL) Lisa Sperling (reviewer) |
| 11.00-11.30 | Morning Tea | |
| 11.30-12.30 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wellbeing and engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Student engagement data ➤ Student wellbeing data ➤ Discussion of self-evaluation findings and school practice ➤ TOR focus | Helen Otway (Prin) Gail Pomfret (AP) Hayriye Ali (F-2 LT) Bec Bubeck (3-6 LT) Julie Leech (Wellbeing) Molly-Rose (1/2) Ken Griffiths (3/4) Rofiqul Islam (parent) Heather Carr Lynn Davie Cat Salt Lisa Sperling (reviewer) |
| 12.30-1.00 | Student discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drumming • The Song Room • Garden House • Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden • SRC • 1:1 iPad program • The Arts • Sport/ Camp | Helen Otway (Prin) Gail Pomfret (AP) Hayriye Ali (F-2 LT) Bec Bubeck (3-6 LT) Julie Leech (Wellbeing) Roxy Clarke (SRC) Rofiqul Islam (parent) Heather Carr Lynn Davie Cat Salt Lisa Sperling (reviewer) |
| 1.00-1.30 | Lunch | Staff Room |
| 1.30-3.30 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendations for improvement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Student achievement ➤ Engagement ➤ Wellbeing ➤ Productivity • Next steps –review report, reporting to the school community and school strategic plan | Helen Otway (Prin) Gail Pomfret (AP) Hayriye Ali (F-2 LT) Bec Bubeck (3-6 LT) Julie Leech (Wellbeing) Michele Smith (BM) Terena Harrison (1/2TL) Fiona Conroy (specialist) Rofiqul Islam (parent) Heather Carr Lynn Davie Cat Salt Lisa Sperling (reviewer) |

Appendix 2: Registration Requirements: Summary Statement

St Albans Heights Primary School

Signature of Reviewer: *L Sperling* Date: 30 /11 /2015

Name of Reviewer: *Lisa Sperling*

| Registration requirements to be met by all Government schools | Is the registration requirement met? |
|--|---|
| SCHOOL GOVERNANCE | |
| • Democratic principles | <i>Evidence provided to VRQA by the Department</i> |
| • Structure | <i>Evidence provided to VRQA by the Department</i> |
| • Philosophy (e.g. - SSP, AIP) • Statement of school philosophy • Explanation of how philosophy is enacted | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Not-for-profit status | <i>Evidence provided to VRQA by the Department</i> |
| ENROLMENT | |
| • Student enrolment policy (Specialist and Specific Purpose*_[see below] schools ONLY) | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| • Student enrolment numbers | <i>Evidence provided to VRQA by the Department</i> |
| • Register of enrolments | <i>Evidence provided to VRQA by the Department</i> |
| CURRICULUM AND STUDENT LEARNING | |
| • Time allocation per learning area (e.g. Timetable) • Explanation of how and when curriculum and teaching practice will be reviewed (e.g. - SSP, AIP, Curriculum Committee minutes, staff Professional Development) • Outline of how the school will deliver its curriculum (e.g. Scope and sequence) • A whole school curriculum plan (e.g. Scope and sequence) • Documented strategy to improve student learning outcomes (e.g. - SSP, AIP) | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Monitoring and reporting on students' performance | <i>Evidence provided to VRQA by the Department</i> |
| STUDENT WELFARE | |
| Student welfare • Student Welfare policy and procedures • Bullying and Harassment policy and procedures | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Student safety • On-site supervision policy and procedures • Excursion policy and procedures • Camps policy and procedures • Ensuring safety and welfare of students with external providers policy and procedures | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Student care • Care arrangements for ill students • Distribution of medication policy and procedures • Anaphylaxis management policy and procedures • Register of staff trained in first aid • Record of student medical condition and management | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Additional evidence • Mandatory reporting policy and procedures • Accidents and incidents register • First aid policy and procedures • Internet policy and procedures • Critical incident plan • Emergency management plan • An outline on how the school communicates policies and procedures on the care, safety and welfare of students to the school community • Emergency bushfire management | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| DISCIPLINE | |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behaviour management policy and procedures (including procedural fairness and an explicit statement prohibiting corporal punishment) An outline of how the school communicates these policies and procedures to the school community | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ATTENDANCE MONITORING | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance monitoring Attendance register | <i>Evidence provided to VRQA by the Department</i> <i>Evidence provided to VRQA by the Department</i> |
| STAFF EMPLOYMENT | |
| Teachers' requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Register of all teachers with name, VIT registration number and category | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Compliance with Working with Children Act 2005 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procedures to ensure that all required staff have <i>Working with children check</i> A <i>Working with children check</i> register Procedures to maintain the <i>Working with children check</i> register | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buildings, facilities and grounds Educational facilities | <i>Evidence provided to VRQA by the Department</i> <i>Evidence provided to VRQA by the Department</i> |
| OTHER REQUIREMENTS | |
| Information about school performance | <i>Evidence provided to VRQA by the Department</i> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registration of an additional year level or campus Changing a school type or location | <i>Applicable only when required</i> <i>Applicable only when required</i> |
| Additional registration requirements to be met by schools offering a senior secondary course or qualification (VCE / VCAL / IB) | |
| Student learning outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current student and staff handbooks Sample student learning sequence Procedures and documentation to indicate staff have been provided with current and accurate information Policies and procedures to enable compliance with the awarding body | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Student records and results <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policies and procedures to maintain accurate student records Policies and procedures to undertake an annual analysis of records and results Policies and procedures to monitor patterns of student participation and completion rates | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Student welfare <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policies and procedures in place consistent with relevant legislation to ensure care, safety and welfare of students and provision of opportunities for students with special needs | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Teaching and learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualified and competent staff to teach and assess the class Suitable teaching resources and physical facilities to provide the course Processes to ensure consistent application of assessment criteria Processes to oversee conduct of assessment, including processes to conduct investigations and hearings, and if necessary amend or cancel assessments | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |

If you require support regarding the minimum standards:

- email [S](#), or
- telephone the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development on 9947 1854, or
- contact your Senior Advisor.

If you would like examples of further evidence to supply please see: [VRQA registration requirements for Victorian Government Schools](#).

* The Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) has registered the following schools as Specific Purpose schools:

- | | |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Austin Hospital School Avenues Education Blackburn English Language School Collingwood English Language School Croydon Community School Distance Education Centre Victoria John Monash Science School Kensington Community High School | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lynall Hall Community School Noble Park English Language School Sovereign Hill School Sydney Road Community School The Alpine School Travancore School Victorian School of Languages Western English Language School |
|---|---|