

# Department for Education External School Review

Partnerships, Schools and Preschools division

## Report for Oak Valley Anangu 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 Christine Bell, Review Officer of the department's Review, Improvement and Accountability directorate and Nick Papadopoulos, 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
  - Community members
  - Anangu Co Ordinator
  - Aboriginal Educators
  - Student representatives
  - Teachers.

## School context

Oak Valley Anangu School caters for students from preschool to year 12. It is situated 1350kms from the Adelaide CBD. The enrolment in 2021, as at the February census is, 17. Enrolment at the time of the previous review was 8. The local partnership is Anangu Lands.

Oak Valley is a remote and isolated community on the fringe of the Great Victoria Desert. 100% of the students are Anangu who speak Pitjantjatjara as their first language. Oak Valley students are highly transient, especially between Yalata and Tujntjunjara. This has a great effect on attendance and the continuity of teaching and learning.

Oak Valley Anangu School services the children and young people of the Anangu Community. Its overarching goal is to improve the learning outcomes of all students with recognition of the importance of culture and traditions on the land which they are located. The school works in partnership with families and the community to empower students to walk strong in both Anangu and Piranpa worlds.

The school plays an important role in the community by providing a safe and secure learning environment for its students and a welcoming hub for families. The school provides health and hygiene programs, including a comprehensive food program. Families have access to showers and bathing facilities for babies and toddlers.

Anangu have a saying “nintiringkuny tjaku” which means “I’m going to learn”. They value lifelong learning and appreciate that their context allows for learning in both directions.

The school leadership team consists of a Principal in the second year of tenure. There are 3 Teachers including 2 in the early years of their career.

### The previous ESR or OTE directions were:

- Direction 1**     **Raise expectations of student learning and increase standards of achievement through data informed site improvement planning.**
- Direction 2**     **Work in partnership with Oak Valley Community and PYEC to ensure students are able to access literacy and numeracy learning through the first pathway of Pitjantjatjara.**
- Direction 3**     **Make more regular and systematic use of diagnostic and formative assessment in short cycles of targeted teaching.**
- Direction 4**     **Work collaboratively with YAS to develop and maintain consistent teaching and assessment practices for the explicit development of student literacy and numeracy.**

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

##### **Direction 1: Raise expectations of student learning and increase standards of achievement through data informed site improvement planning.**

- Literacy and numeracy blocks from Monday to Thursday are quarantined from interruption.
- Common messaging from the school and community has been used to reduce student avoidance strategies.

- Learning intentions and success criteria are used in every class and referred to by students.
- Literacy and numeracy agreements have been created and are adhered to.
- Public data walls are maintained and discussed throughout the school and the community.
- Learning awards are given out weekly.
- Community notice boards display learning and have interactive tasks for families.
- Public social media platforms promote learning and expectations for students.
- The school improvement plan (SIP) is discussed weekly, including new data or data requirements.

**Direction 2: Work in partnership with Oak Valley Community and PYEC to ensure students can access literacy and numeracy learning through the first pathway of Pitjantjatjara.**

- Increased employment of Aboriginal Educators and an Anangu Coordinator.
- Implementation of the Two-Way-Science (TWS) program and co-learning with the Oak Valley Rangers.
- Consultation with Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Education Committee (PYEC) is ongoing around new services and structures.
- The library is now the language and culture space.

**Direction 3: Make more regular and systematic use of diagnostic and formative assessment in short cycles of targeted teaching.**

- One or two-week planning cycles with common planning templates are used.
- Assessment is uploaded to a digital platform accessible to parents / caregivers for transparency and accountability.
- The template begins with a rationale to clarify teacher intent around their expected cohort and current data.

**Direction 4: Work collaboratively with YAS to develop and maintain consistent teaching and assessment practices for the explicit development of student literacy and numeracy.**

- Use of a common digital data and portfolio platform.
- Common pedagogies and programs introduced including Two-Way Science, a structured, hands on maths program, and literacy and phonics programs.
- Regular hub-based professional development (PD) opportunities and data discussion.
- Shared access to a data platform provides teachers with cross site student data.

## Lines of inquiry

### 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 staff have collective knowledge, skills and understanding of how to use data to identify strengths and gaps in students' learning to inform the next steps for further improvement. There are multiple data sets, including culturally appropriate assessment data collected through the Two-Way Science curriculum, to determine the school's goals and targets. The school transparently displays student achievement and growth data as evidenced by data walls in the staff room, classrooms, in the local community shop and the entrance to the school. The school is well positioned to develop opportunities for students to be actively involved in using their data to make decisions around their own learning and goal setting. By engaging the students in these strategic planning processes to analyse, prioritise and develop ambitious goals and targets, the school will provide opportunities for students to become powerful partners in their learning.

All staff, including Anangu Educators, are ensuring a focus on quality school improvement planning is driving achievable, challenging goals and targets. These goals and targets are aligned to the school's vision of providing contextualised learning that empowers all students to develop a growth mindset and become risk takers in their learning. There is an opportunity for the school to embed and expand this work. Engaging the students, their families, and the extended community in these intentional planning processes will enable them to work together to set goals and targets and review student progress as a continual process. This connection to community will continue to build parent capacity, allowing Anangu to support their child's learning and enhance their schooling experience.

Solid and respectful relationships exist between all members of the school community and this will support the effective development and implementation of the new SIP (2022-2024), using best-practice strategies for achieving growth in students' learning. This will involve an authentic, collaborative, and consultative cyclical approach to effective school improvement planning, that highlights continuous monitoring, evaluation, reviewing and planning, and is actioned by all teachers and Anangu Educators.

**Direction 1      Strengthen school improvement planning processes by building staff, student, and parent data literacy to inform goals and targets that maximise impact on student learning.**

## Effective teaching and student learning

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

All staff have a clear understanding and commitment to deliver quality pedagogical practice to meet the diverse learning needs of all students across the school. All teachers use the Learning Through Doing strategy to differentiate learning for students which is evident in all teacher planning and practice. Teachers provide verbal feedback to all students on their next steps in learning in a manner that is culturally respectful.

Scaffolding exists for students to inspire and achieve at the appropriate year level Australian Curriculum standard in science, through the TWS planning and assessment. The panel saw evidence of all students engaged and challenged in their learning in an authentic context in both literacy and the TWS curriculum. Learning intentions and success criteria are displayed in every classroom and in every teachers' planning, and students were able to culturally articulate their purpose.

The school is well positioned to embed high impact pedagogical strategies, including co construction of student learning goals. The establishment of clear culturally appropriate learning intentions, and engaging students' understanding of success criteria will continue the cycle of improvement. This will include building teacher capacity to support students in peer-to-peer tutoring and student collaborative learning. There are further opportunities for the school to embed effective practice through designing differentiated learning to meet learning needs for all. Using prior skills, knowledge, and abilities with the expansion of the Two-Way Science strategy into other curriculum areas will support this.

Opportunities exist for teachers to develop their skills and abilities to continue the progression of learning across all years of schooling, by collaboratively developing curriculum and genre mapping, to include cross curriculum priorities and general capabilities. This work can be further expanded by implementing intervention strategies to strengthen and provide sequential steps in learning that will complement a newly developed writing improvement strategy.

The solid relationship the school has with the local education team (LET), provides opportunities for all staff to build teacher and Aboriginal Educators' pedagogical capacity in data analysis and evidence-based pedagogy through professional learning communities (PLCs).

**Direction 2      Build teacher capacity to implement high impact teaching strategies that further improve student learning outcomes by collaborating through reflective practice with colleagues beyond the site.**

## Effective leadership

How effective are the schools' professional learning and performance development processes in building teacher capacity?

School leaders have a focus on the fluid art of leadership, seeking ongoing feedback and maintaining a relentless focus on continuous improvement for all students. There is a shared culture of high expectations for student learning, with expectations around accountability for all staff that is understood and valued. The school is well positioned to continue to embed a school culture that has staff commitment and student achievement as a collective vision.

Professional development is provided for some Anangu staff to build leadership capacity and regular professional conversations about teachers' impact in the classroom are appreciated and valued by all. These conversations can be strengthened by using data, evidence, and analysis of students' learning as a platform to support teachers to reflect and adjust their practice. The leader effectively supports teachers to successfully action their challenge of practice and has supported staff to engage in the partnership initiative of working with teachers to reflect on their pedagogical practice including classroom observation and written feedback.

There is an opportunity for leadership to lead staff to collectively produce whole school agreements outlining key expectations for teaching practice. This will work to reduce variability, providing consistency of practice for all teachers, especially those new to the school. A challenge, due to the remoteness of the school, is to expand teacher capacity through providing learning opportunities externally. The school may choose to explore implementing professional learning communities (PLCs) with other like schools through online platforms, and this could extend beyond partnership schools.

While regular feedback to teachers occurs through termly conversations, this can be broadened through a more formalised approach to observation and feedback conversations about pedagogical practice. To strengthen these professional conversations, there is an opportunity to ensure all professional learning plans have goals that are directly linked to the SIP with written feedback to teachers occurring regularly, to improve teacher capacity. There is also a unique opportunity to promote Anangu leadership to lead other Anangu Educators in this process by developing and implementing a performance management and development process that is documented and culturally appropriate.

**Direction 3** Continue to develop a culture of high expectations by providing a cycle of consistent, focused observations and feedback to strengthen teacher and Anangu Educators' capacity to achieve improvement goals.

# Outcomes of the External School Review 2021

Oak Valley Anangu School is to be commended for their work implementing strategies and processes to address the previous External Review Directions as this has enhanced student outcomes and educational experiences. The school promotes respectful, productive relationships and partnerships with all families and community members, ensuring students enjoy optimal conditions for learning. The focus the school has on providing learning for their students in an authentic, culturally appropriate context, allows students to experience multiple opportunities to be stretched and challenged in their learning.

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

- Direction 1**    **Strengthen school improvement planning processes by building staff, student, and parent data literacy to inform goals and targets that maximise impact on student learning.**
- Direction 2**    **Build teacher capacity to implement high impact teaching strategies that further improve student learning outcomes by collaborating through reflective practice with colleagues beyond the site.**
- Direction 3**    **Continue to develop a culture of high expectations by providing a cycle of consistent, focused observations and feedback to strengthen teacher and Anangu Educators' capacity to achieve improvement goals.**

Based on the school's current performance, Oak Valley Anangu School will be externally reviewed again in 2024.



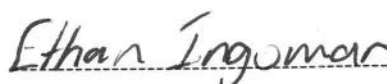
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