**School Review Report**

**2020 – 2024 Cycle**

Wangaratta West Primary School

4642

1. Public section

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| 1.1 SCHOOL CONTEXT | |
| **Location and history** | Originally opened in 1950, Wangaratta West Primary School is located in a residential area, on the western side of the Rural City of Wangaratta. The school was completely rebuilt between 2008 and 2011. |
| **School facilities** | The 23 classroom spaces at the school are located within four permanent blocks, along with three sets of relocatable buildings. A large multi-purpose hall, with attached canteen and music suite is adjacent to the main administration office block. This administration building also houses staffroom facilities, the principal and assistant principal offices and a wellbeing room. The Library and an Art room, along with a dedicated Science room complete the school’s built facilities.  Within the school grounds are a number of adventure playground sets, a large hard-court area and grassed playing areas. |
| **Enrolments** | At the time of the review, the school’s enrolment was 485 students. Most of these students were drawn from within Wangaratta, with a small number travelling into the school by bus from surrounding rural areas. |
| **SFO and SFOE** | The school's SFOE at the time of the review was 0.4185. |
| **Staff profile** | In 2021, the staff profile consisted of a principal, 1.8 FTE (fulltime equivalent) assistant principals, 2.67 FTE learning specialist teachers, 24.6 FTE teachers (including specialist subject teachers), 1.4 FTE Learning Tutors. The Education Support team consists of 10.49 FTE classroom support and administrative support staff, and a fulltime Business Manager. A wellbeing team supports the school’s students and families through the services of a 0.4 FTE Chaplain and a 0.8 FTE Wellbeing Officer. |
| **Curriculum** | The school provides an approved curriculum framework differentiated to meet student needs, based on the Victorian Curriculum. A Hands-On Learning program is offered to students. A school-based extension program, which also supports student participation in the Victorian Challenge and Enrichment Program augments the curriculum for students achieving above the expected learning standards.  All students participate in weekly specialist classes: Music, Science, Physical Education, Auslan and Visual Arts.  Wangaratta West Primary School has implemented whole school approaches to building students’ engagement, resilience and wellbeing using the frameworks of Respectful Relationships and School Wide Positive Behaviour Supports. |
| **Additional information** | The school offers before and after-school care, along with vacation-care.  It is a Professional Learning Communities (PLC) Link School and provides support to other network schools that are developing this collaborative enquiry professional learning approach. |

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| 1.2 SCHOOL & COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHTS | |
| **Highlight 1** | |
| **Strengthening community connections** | **FISO dimension: Parents and carers as partners** |
| The Panel heard from staff, school leaders and parents about the work done by the school over the period of the previous School Strategic Plan (SSP) to build stronger connections with families and the broader school community. The school had improved its communication platforms and had offered a range of opportunities for families to connect with the school, and with each other during this time.  The Panel also heard that regular surveys and questionnaires had been used to gather feedback and suggestions for improvement in this area from families and students. It noted that the positive endorsement in the Parent Opinion Survey module: *School Ethos and Environment* had increased over the period being reviewed and that these variables had levels of endorsement that were higher than the state average and the levels for similar schools.  The Panel agreed that this engagement of parents and carers as partners in learning had been a school community highlight for the past four years. | |
| **Highlight 2** | |
| **Positive environment for learning** | **FISO dimension: Stategic resource management** |
| During the period of the past SSP, the school’s enrolment had increased from 389 to 485 students. This had led to the school reviewing its use and layout of facilities to maximise students’ learning time on task and to ensure the best use of the available spaces around the school. Classroom environments had been a focus of this, with an expectation that teachers use displays as prompts or scaffolds for learning and minimise distractions by removal of clutter in the rooms. Smaller class sizes had been facilitated by re-purposing spaces which had previously been designated as shared areas or corridors. Furniture within rooms had been selected based on its capacity to offer a flexible and purposeful work space for children and their teachers.  Playground areas had also been refurbished in consultation with children and their families to make them safer and to offer students a sense of ownership and pride.  The Panel noted the calm and orderly learning tone across the school and agreed that the work done to provide an improved learning environment for students had been a highlight of the reviewed period. | |
| **Highlight 3** | |
| **Embedding a guaranteed and viable curriculum** | **FISO dimension: Building practice excellence** |
| The Panel heard that the school’s key professional learning focus for the previous four years had been on building all teachers’ capability to collaboratively plan and implement a quality curriculum program; particularly in English and Mathematics. Teaching teams had been supported to work together and to develop a data-informed approach to their collaborative planning. An updated instructional model had offered teachers clear guidelines related to structuring of lessons in Reading, Writing, Science and Mathematics. The school’s leadership team had supported all teachers to develop their practice, and to ensure consistency across the school within these models, through regular classroom observations and through the provision of modelling of best practice or mentoring of individual staff.  The Panel noted the consistent use of the instructional model as they visited classrooms. They observed teachers engaged in collaborative planning sessions; using the school’s agreed approaches and templates as they worked. The Panel found that this work on building all teachers’ practice in planning and teaching the curriculum to have been a highlight of the school’s work through the period of the previous SSP. | |
| **Highlight 4** | |
| **School-wide Positive Behaviour Approach** | **FISO dimension: Setting expectations and promoting inclusion** |
| During the previous four years, the school had developed and implemented a consistent and positive approach to ensuring a calm and orderly learning environment. This included the development of a Positive Behaviour Matrix displayed in every room, the introduction of 'Westy Wolf' (a school mascot whose attributes reflected school values) and the promotion of positive behaviour through regular awards and recognition. A therapy dog had been introduced into the school to support positive behaviour of children experiencing difficulty in regulating their emotions.  School leaders explained to the Panel that timetabled weekly lessons had explicitly taught the school’s values, and had focussed on building resilience and reinforcing positive behaviour expectations. Support staff and teachers described the systematic use of individual education plans and behaviour support plans in working to support individual students’ engagement in learning.  The Panel agreed that this work had been a school community highlight of the past four years. | |

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| 1.3 SUMMARY OF KEY REVIEW FINDINGS |
| **Performance against the School Strategic Plan (SSP) goals and targets**  **SSP Goal 1:**  The 2017-2020 School Strategic Plan for Wangaratta West Primary School had set a goal to accelerate the learning growth of every student in English, Mathematics and Science. The Panel found that the school had partially met this goal, with targets related to the development of consistency in practice being fully achieved, and the targets for improved student learning outcomes being partially achieved.  **SSP Goal 2:**  The second goal set for the school was to develop inquiring, creative and critical thinking students who challenged themselves to advance their learning. Two groups of targets, related to teacher skills and knowledge, and students’ perceptions of their learning as stimulating and motivating, had been set. The Panel found the school had not met this goal, with neither of the targets sets achieved.  **SSP Goal 3**  A third goal set for the school was to develop resilient students who displayed behaviours and attitudes that reflected the school values. Targets for the goal related to observable practices in the learning environment, and to students’ perceptions of their safety and connectedness to school. The Panel agreed that the school had partially met this goal, with the first target fully achieved, and the second target partially achieved.  **Findings against the Terms of Reference Focus Questions**  **Terms of Reference Focus Question 1:** To what extent is student agency and voice evident, and contributing to students actively engaging in their learning?  The Panel conducted student forums, interviews with the Student Representative Council (SRC), classroom observations and interviews with school leaders and teachers. The Panel found that there was evidence of student agency in classrooms through goal-setting and the use of exemplars to illustrate the success criteria in some tasks. However, the Panel agreed that authentic student choice and voice in their own learning was not yet evident in all classrooms and recommended that this could be an area to be strengthened in the next SSP.  **Terms of Reference Focus Question 2:** To what extent do the school’s curriculum and pedagogical approaches offer stimulating and challenging learning and promote students’ intellectual engagement?  The Panel noted a calm and orderly learning environment in their observations of classrooms across the school. Students were able to explain the purpose of their learning to the Panel, and to describe how the structure of lessons supported their engagement and confidence in learning. The Panel heard that specialist learning areas had been highly-valued by students and that, alongside intervention programs for students with additional learning needs, the school had offered extension programs to selected learners who were achieving above-expected levels.  As a result of conversations with students, teachers and school leaders, the Panel found that the school had trialled approaches to integrating some areas of the curriculum. A previous model of Inquiry Learning had been replaced by a ‘WOW Week’ each term where students had an opportunity to link a number of learning areas under one theme or topic.  The Panel agreed that the school had not yet embedded an approach to whole-school curriculum planning and delivery, and that this could be an area of improvement going forward. |

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| 1.4 SUMMARY OF KEY DIRECTIONS FOR THE NEXT SCHOOL STRATEGIC PLAN |
| The School Review Panel agreed the following key directions for the next School Strategic Plan:   * Student voice, choice and agency * Stimulated and challenging learning * Literacy and Numeracy, with a focus on practical application within real-world contexts * Wellbeing strategies and approaches to build connectedness and engagement for all learners |