

External School Review - Kilkenny Primary School

Across our education system, we seek growth for every student, in every class, and in every school. The external school review value-adds and supports schools to raise student achievement and sustain high performance by providing an expert external perspective on school performance by verifying or challenging:

- a school's improvement planning and processes and its impact on student learning
- the impact of previous external school directions
- the rigour of a school's improvement practices
- the school's capacity to achieve or sustain learning improvement over time.

The external school review lines of inquiry focus on:

- quality school improvement planning
- expert teaching
- quality leadership
- conditions for optimal learning.

The overarching question in every external school review is: How well does the school improve achievement, growth, challenge, engagement, and equity?

Reported impact of directions from the previous External School Review in June 2019.

The leadership team provided information regarding the actions that have been undertaken in each of the previous directions detailing what they did, the evidence of impact and the next steps. Evidence of impact in each direction was provided in a variety of ways including staff and student videos, planning documents, records of professional learning community sprints, surveys and thorough review processes. The first direction focused on aligning the work of professional learning communities and performance development processes to improvement practices. Evidence of impact includes the ability to amplify the use of high impact teaching strategies across the school. These included reciprocal reading in primary classes and number talks across the school which are both strategies in explicit instruction. There is greater staff connection to school improvement planning and a shared responsibility for implementation. The introduction of professional learning community pillars (staff leaders) has increased leadership density across the school. Improved student achievement data is also evident and there is greater alignment of practice and pedagogy across the school. Direction 2 involved strengthening the development of a whole school pedagogical agreement – challenging powerful learners. Evidence of impact in the work actioned in this area includes practices align to evidence and research, student goal setting across all classrooms and moving from maintain momentum to inspire through an increase in the school performance score between 2019 and 2022. The staff have collaboratively developed pedagogical agreements that focus on six high impact teaching strategies. There is significant evidence of student agency in their learning. The final direction was strengthening clarity, rigor and alignment of performance development processes to build the capability of staff to meet the needs of students. This has provided greater consistency of learning experiences for students across the school and agreed practices for phonics instruction, reading comprehension and mathematics. Even though there are only five staff remaining from the time of the previous review the school has continued to use the directions to guide their improvement work and have clearly identified the next steps for development.

Outcomes from the External School Review held in March 2023.

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

- Direction 1** Identify and align the focus areas in the pedagogical agreement to support the collaborative planning, design and review of learning tasks to embed them as whole school practice.
- Direction 2** Build teacher capability by providing explicit feedback through a range of formal and informal processes that improves practice, teacher effectiveness and accelerates learning outcomes for all students.
- Direction 3** Strengthen processes and structures which involve all stakeholders to develop common understandings of effective strategies that support inclusion for all and provides clarity of the connections to the school improvement plan and classroom practice.

These directions are published on the school improvement plan and will support the school's ongoing improvement work. **Based on the school's current performance, Kilkenny Primary School will be externally reviewed again in 2026.**



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