



Department of  
Education

**Shaping the future**

# Cunderdin District High School

## Public School Review

# Public School Review

## Purpose

All Western Australian public schools are reviewed by the Department of Education's Public School Accountability directorate. A review gives assurance to the local community, the Minister for Education and Training and the Director General about the performance of public schools in delivering high quality education to students. The review acknowledges the achievements of the school and gives feedback to support the Principal and staff with their improvement planning.

Initially conducted on a three-year cycle, subsequent reviews are determined to occur on a one, three or five year timeframe.

The Principal provides the review team with a self-assessment of the school's performance based on evidence from the school. Information to be validated by the review team is considered before and during the school visit. This forms the basis for the Public School Review report and determines when the next review will occur. The report is provided to the Principal and the regional Director of Education.

## Expectations of schools

The Statement of Expectation (the Statement) makes clear and public the expectations and responsibilities of schools and the Department in student achievement and progress.

The Statement is between; the Department of Education, represented by the Director General; the school, represented by the Principal; and is noted by the school council/board, represented by the Chair.

The Statement sets out the expectations of Principals in relation to the delivery of the 2020-2024 strategic directions *Every student, every classroom, every day*, and *Building on Strength*.

The Statement will underpin each school's strategic planning and self-assessment and will form part of the school's Public School Review, as well as the Professional Performance Review of the Principal.

## Public School Review – The Standard

A Standard has been developed across the domains of the School Improvement and Accountability Framework to describe essential indicators of performance. The selection of the indicators is based on literature research and historical reviews of school performance in Western Australian public schools.

The purpose is to better ensure that judgements about student performance are standardised and objective. Indicators describe what is evident in schools functioning 'as expected' within each domain.

The Standard defines the expected level of school performance. Judgements are made in relation to the Standard. External validation is also based on evidence presented relating to the Standard.

For further information or resource in alternative formats for people with accessibility needs, please contact [PublicSchoolAccountability.PublicSchoolReview@education.wa.edu.au](mailto:PublicSchoolAccountability.PublicSchoolReview@education.wa.edu.au)

## Context

Cunderdin District High School is located approximately 160 kilometres east of Perth in the Wheatbelt Education Region.

The school was established in 1902 and has a strong and proud history with the local farming community. In 2015, the school became an Independent Public School.

Currently, there are 157 students enrolled from Kindergarten to Year 10. Cunderdin District High School has an Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage of 939 (decile 8).

Community support for the school is demonstrated through the work of the School Board and Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C).

## School self-assessment validation

The Principal submitted a comprehensive school self-assessment.

The following aspects of the school's self-assessment process are confirmed:

- The process of preparing for the Public School Review was in keeping with the ongoing and embedded procedures for self-assessment at the school.
- Leaders involved staff in the identification of evidence to support the entries provided in each domain of the School Improvement and Accountability Framework.
- The Electronic School Assessment Tool (ESAT) submission provided a detailed account of the school context.
- Unpacking the Standard assisted the new leadership team to make informed judgements and planned actions against each of the domains. Recent data consolidated the decisions made throughout the process.
- A number of staff, students and parents participated in conversations throughout the validation visit, each providing further elaboration to support aspects of the ESAT submission.

The following recommendation is made:

- Utilise the Standard and the ESAT to support ongoing self-assessment practices between school review cycles.

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### Relationships and partnerships

School leaders have worked hard to foster respectful and positive relationships within the school and the wider community.

#### Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Underpinned by a strong commitment, collaboration is considered as an opportunity to build meaningful relationships between staff, with leaders providing time for this to occur.
- Strong community connections are fostered resulting in respectful and valued relationships with families.
- Communication is given a high priority and is delivered using a range of platforms to ensure staff and the school community are well informed, resulting in high levels of satisfaction.
- Community feedback is valued by the school and reflects a positive outlook by students, parents and staff. This informs improvements to the school's processes and procedures.
- Partnerships with local businesses and community organisations enhance and foster opportunities to support a broad range of student interest.
- Local community support for the school is evidenced in increasing secondary enrolments.
- An active and generous P&C support the school through promotion and fundraising events. This is strengthened further by the School Board's governance and advocacy for the school and community.

#### Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Continue to establish relationships and partnerships that ensure culturally responsive practices and communications are undertaken.

### Learning environment

A positive and engaging learning environment is providing the conditions required to support student learning.

#### Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- There is a commitment to ensuring a safe, caring and inclusive learning environment for staff and students, underpinned by a focus on optimising student learning and wellbeing.
- The school grounds are well maintained and provide a motivating aspect of the physical environment for students, staff, parents and visitors.
- Student engagement promotes positive student behaviour, which is strengthened by the care staff demonstrate for all students.
- The health and wellbeing of students is promoted through positive relationships within the school and the successful implementation of Positive Behaviour Support and Zones of Regulation.
- A number of avenues have been established to provide opportunities for students to have a voice. They are able to articulate examples of when they believe the school has acted on concerns they have raised.

#### Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Progress planned intentions to develop a whole-school approach to student health and wellbeing and managing students at educational risk (SAER).

## Leadership

The newly formed leadership team have a shared vision for the school's future direction and a commitment to providing opportunities for staff to fully engage in strategic and operational planning.

### Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The school's vision and priorities align with the expectations outlined in the Department's strategic directions, 'Building on Strength'.
- Alignment between the school's business plan and the contextual needs of students is a priority and responsive to student outcomes.
- School priorities are monitored for progress against business plan targets using systemic and school-based data to inform future decisions for improvement.
- The leadership team recognises the need for timely and informed change through a strategic and measured approach that is inclusive of all.
- An investment in leading instruction and a commitment to consistency of practice is a priority for school leaders.

### Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Formalise and increase opportunities to develop the leadership capacity of teacher leaders through professional learning, mentoring and ongoing engagement in leading school priority areas.
- Further develop and formalise processes for groups of staff to drive school priority areas, particularly in relation to literacy and numeracy, through involvement in the development of operational plans.
- Consider the degree to which school priorities are being addressed through current levels of documentation and existing programs and structures.

## Use of resources

Guided by the business plan priorities and targets, the Principal and manager corporate services (MCS) ensure decisions about the allocation of financial, physical and human resources are researched and evidence-based.

### Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Financial management processes and procedures are sound with all budget decisions overseen by the School Board and Finance Committee.
- Resource allocation is aligned to school business plan priorities as evidenced in the investment of the whole-school Sounds~Write phonics program.
- The asset replacement plan is helping to drive the long-term goal to ensure that information and communications technology resources remain current and includes an effective maintenance plan.
- Student characteristics and targeted initiative funding is deployed to maintain a range of support strategies that assist in student learning and enrichment programs.
- Attention to workforce planning by the Principal and MCS is effective in supporting the ongoing and complex needs of the school and its students.

### Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Ensure that resources are clearly articulated in operational plans and are aligned to student needs and the priorities identified by the school.

## Teaching quality

Staff have demonstrated a commitment to the collaborative development of a school-wide approach to pedagogy.

### Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The whole-school approach to, and implementation of, the Sounds~Write phonics program is demonstrating a positive impact on the literacy achievement of students.
- With a focus on the benefits of recently implemented Explicit Direct Instruction there is an emerging confidence in teachers, which is positively impacting teaching and learning outcomes.
- There is an increasing awareness of the need for effective use of school-based data to inform teaching and learning programs.
- The Cunderdin District High School paradigm is aligned to the Explicit Instruction Model and is referred to and visible in classrooms.
- Identification of SAER and intervention is supported through Individual Education Plans and additional literacy support.

### Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Establish a whole-school collaborative meeting schedule ensuring time for collaboration in curriculum planning, data analysis and moderation.
- Ensure learning area operational plans are aligned to the school's business plan.
- Review the provision of professional learning to ensure it is specifically targeting the priorities of the school and staff and aligned to current and future direction.

## Student achievement and progress

School leaders and staff demonstrate a collective commitment to improving student achievement and progress, which is having a positive effect on student learning.

### Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Student achievement is tracked using both system and school-based data with all 2021 NAPLAN<sup>1</sup> assessment data exceeding that of contextually similar schools in Year 3, Year 5 and Year 9.
- Higher progress than like schools between Years 3-5, Years 5-7 and Years 7-9, for all NAPLAN assessments, is a credit to the efforts of staff.
- Support for students to maintain their literacy standards is provided through implementation of the Sounds~Write phonics program.
- All business plan targets are presented as SMART goals, with feedback from the Department's School Performance team sought by leaders.
- Student achievement and progress data is centralised through the Whole-School Data spreadsheet. This informs teacher planning and yearly handover processes.

### Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Ensure literacy and numeracy targets are embedded and monitored through operational plans.
- Provide structures and moderation opportunities, both within the school and with other schools, to ensure consistency in judgements made.

## Reviewers

Vicki McKeown  
**Director, Public School Review**

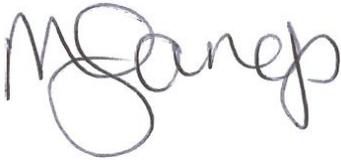
Clare Roser  
**Principal, Western Australian College of Agriculture,  
Narrogin  
Peer Reviewer**

## Endorsement

Based on this report, I endorse the commendations and recommendations made by the review team regarding your school's performance.

The timeframe for the next review process focusing on the Leadership domain only, will be Term 4, 2022.

The next Public School Review, inclusive of all domains, will be scheduled for Term 4, 2024.



Melesha Sands  
**Deputy Director General, Schools**

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## References

1 National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy