



Department of  
Education

GOVERNMENT OF  
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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D21/0274296

# Dalwallinu District High School

## Public School Review

May 2021



# PUBLIC SCHOOL REVIEW

## Purpose

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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 its 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 school review report and determines when the next review will occur. The report is provided to the Principal, the Chair of the School Council/Board and the regional Director of Education.

## Expectations of schools

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The Statement of Expectation (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

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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.



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## Context

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Established on its current site in 1963, Dalwallinu District High School is situated within the Wheatbelt Education Region. Located approximately 250 kilometres north of Perth along the Great Northern Highway, the wheat farming town of Dalwallinu is in the heart of wildflower country and the first stop along the Wildflower Way. Students attend from farming areas in the region and from the nearby towns of Latham, Buntine, Wubin, Pithara and Kalannie.

Currently, 200 students from Kindergarten to Year 12 are enrolled at the school, with students in Years 11 and 12 able to enrol in subjects at the School of Isolated and Distance Education. Senior students also have the opportunity to participate in school-based traineeships.

There are purpose-built early childhood classrooms, specialist design and technology class spaces, a science laboratory, and a variety of play areas.

The school has an Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage of 964 (decile 7).

The community is represented through the School Council, which ratifies the school's strategic plan and budget, and the Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C), which provides support through the contribution of funding and resources.

## School self-assessment validation

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The Principal submitted a comprehensive and rigorous school self-assessment.

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

- The Electronic School Assessment Tool (ESAT) submission provided an account of the current school context and actions planned for the future.
- Staff were involved in the preparation of the ESAT submission. They were provided an opportunity to select a domain to discuss and reflect on the evidence to be submitted.
- The school's self-assessment was enhanced by conversations with members of the school community, who contributed their reflections and engaged actively during the validation visit.
- The Principal and staff demonstrated a genuine understanding of the context of the school, its development to date, and the direction for future planning.
- Involvement in the preparation of the ESAT was viewed positively by staff as a validation of their work.

The following recommendation is made:

- Consider using the ESAT to record performance evidence as part of the ongoing school self-assessment process.

## Public School Review

### Relationships and partnerships

The leadership team has built a collegial culture founded on mutual respect, trust and support amongst staff, students and families. Relationships with the whole-school community are positive and productive.

#### Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The school has built strong relationships and partnerships with the community, based on the clear intention of adding value to learning programs and building career pathways for students.
- Trusting relationships focused on professional support and development, are evident amongst staff.
- Students hold staff in high regard and believe they act in their best interest.
- Positive relationships with Aboriginal families are supported and built upon by the Aboriginal and Islander education officer.
- School Council and P&C members provide support and are strong advocates for the school. The P&C-run Parent and Carer Facebook page facilitates communication with the school community.
- Parents and students are provided with regular opportunities to give feedback to the school through a range of survey tools.

#### Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Continue to build and maintain relationships with local Aboriginal families and Elders to strengthen their engagement within the school.
- The School Council to continue to explore ways to strengthen engagement with the Filipino community.

### Learning environment

The school prides itself on providing a safe and caring environment for students and staff, with an evolving culture that supports quality learning and positive behaviours.

#### Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The language of M.O.R.E. (Mindful, Organised, Respectful and showing Excellence) is well understood by the students and used during classroom discussions to promote desired behaviour within the school.
- The introduction of Zones of Regulation has been well received by both the staff and students. Consistency of lesson planning across classes ensures a common approach across the school.
- Through the deputy principal, there are established processes for supporting students at educational risk. There is an emphasis in the primary years of in-class adjustment and modification of programs to meet the educational needs of individuals and groups of students.
- Friday clubs offer students relevant and topical learning opportunities that are motivating, engaging and appreciated by the students. The initiative is having a positive impact and improving attendance.

#### Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Maintain regular meetings of the Social and Emotional Learning Committee to ensure the sustainability of whole-school practices, and learning opportunities, for staff and students.
- Continue to monitor the consistency of the implementation of Zones of Regulation.
- Consolidate the school's plan to address student disengagement and non-attendance.

## Leadership

There is collective confidence in the school leadership team, with staff being given a clear voice in the direction of the school.

### Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Staff demonstrate ownership of school direction and feel empowered to drive change, with a high level of collaborative decision making evident.
- A multi-tiered structure of leadership provides opportunities for aspirants to pursue leadership experiences and staff the opportunity to coach, model and support each other to strengthen classroom practice.
- Through participation in the Inland Lighthouse Network Lead Teachers initiative, the school provides the opportunity for teachers to undertake curriculum leadership at a systemic level.
- Performance management processes have been redesigned to include student feedback to teaching staff on their practice, through the Pivot survey.

### Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Further support the implementation of whole-school plans and the continuity and effectiveness of teaching programs through collaboration and peer observation.
- Reflect on the Western Australian Future Leaders Framework to develop staff understanding of leadership development and the building of leadership capacity.

## Use of resources

Resources are managed through formalised procedures by the Principal, manager corporate services and Finance Committee. These processes optimise the oversight of resource allocation.

### Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- A long-term asset replacement schedule has been established and links directly to the school's business plan and ongoing management of the school's infrastructure and assets.
- School resourcing requirements and expenditure are articulated clearly within operational plans, providing alignment between teaching and learning reforms and budget allocations.
- Finance Committee members and cost centre managers are well informed and plan proactively for short-term and long-term considerations for optimal impact on student learning.
- Targeted initiatives and student characteristics funding are directed to enable the school to provide additional support as required and meet the outcomes and obligations of the Funding Agreement for Schools.
- The school's ongoing commitment to the provision of staff professional learning and leadership development is supported through judicious budget management.

### Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Explore support options for English as an Additional Language or Dialect students and families.
- Consolidate the coordination and monitoring of education assistant allocation to ensure alignment with student support and intervention program requirements.

## Teaching quality

The Principal and other school leaders expect all staff to review programs regularly and demonstrate the quality of their teaching to ensure improvement in student achievement and progress.

### Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Professional learning is well supported and linked directly to improving student learning outcomes. Staff reflection and collaboration following professional learning has resulted in greater consistency in program delivery.
- Specialist teachers engage with classroom teachers to provide integrated learning opportunities, adding to the students' depth of understanding.
- The introduction of Phase of Learning meetings is enhancing agreed whole-school approaches to classroom practice. This is being supported by the introduction of subject specific vocabulary, Heggerty Phonemic Awareness, WALT (we are learning to) and WILF (what I'm looking for).
- Staff are beginning to use assessment tools (such as Brightpath) and student data to inform their planning and practice to better meet students' targeted learning needs.
- The school is moving toward the implementation of explicit instruction. A considered approach to professional learning in this area is building teacher understanding.

### Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Continue to involve all staff in the ongoing development of the literacy and numeracy plans, and embedding of the agreed pedagogical approach across the school.

## Student achievement and progress

The school collects a range of systemic and school-based data, which inform reflection against school success, teachers' planning and strategic planning.

### Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Since 2017, Year 7 NAPLAN<sup>1</sup> and First Cut data demonstrate positive student progress for each cohort in numeracy, reading and writing. Reading has demonstrated strong improvement throughout this period.
- All teaching staff are involved in analysing NAPLAN data at the individual and cohort level, to identify areas of strength and weakness, and guide the development of whole-school plans, programs and initiatives.
- Through providing Year 10 to 12 students with special intensive and targeted study groups, students have developed a more positive attitude towards the OLNA<sup>2</sup> and attained high achievement in 2020.
- Staff are conversant with accessing the Student Achievement and Information System to assist with planning and assessment. Year group analysis is used to demonstrate the links between student achievement in the Western Australian Curriculum and NAPLAN progress.

### Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Consolidate the range of diagnostic assessments and develop staff knowledge to enable them to engage in in-depth discussion for planning purposes.
- Ensure moderation sessions are provided within the school and across the network to provide greater consistency in teacher judgement.

## Reviewers

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Lou Zeid  
Director, Public School Review

Tracy Pickering  
Principal, Wagin District High School  
Peer Reviewer

## Endorsement

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

Your next school review is scheduled for Term 2, 2024.



Melesha Sands  
Deputy Director General, Schools

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## References

- 1 National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy
- 2 Online Literacy and Numeracy Assessment