



Department of
Education

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Mullewa District High School

Public School Review

May 2021



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 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

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

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

Mullewa District High School is located approximately 100 kilometres east of Geraldton and 450 kilometres north of Perth, within the Midwest Education Region. Mullewa is an agricultural community, and an area known for its display of wildflowers in spring.

Established as a primary school in 1895, the school became a district high school in 1971 and boasts a long and proud history in the community. It has an Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage of 674 (decile 10).

With a large number of Aboriginal families in the region, the school has a predominately Aboriginal student population. Currently, 76 students are enrolled from Kindergarten to Year 12.

A range of opportunities are provided for students, including the use of a fully equipped design and technology room, music room and access to specialist teachers in physical education, home economics, design and technology and music.

Connection with families is valued highly by the school, and the Midwest Employment and Economic Development Aboriginal Corporation Connectors (Bus Patrol) makes regular contact with parents and conducts home visits. The school is supported by the Fogarty EDvance School Improvement Program, and community support is provided by the School Council.

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 school's Assessment Summary submitted with the Electronic School Assessment Tool (ESAT) submission, outlined for reviewers the context of the school, including the current opportunities and challenges for improvement.
- Leaders spent time unpacking the reference section of the ESAT, considering the lines of enquiry in developing judgements and identifying evidence to include in the submission.
- Staff engaged in disciplined dialogue over two school development days, providing input into the ESAT submission.
- A staff survey indicated the value staff placed on their involvement in the self-assessment process.

The following recommendations are made:

- Use the ESAT in ongoing self-assessment against the domains of the School Improvement and Accountability Framework.
- Use the Standard to identify the most appropriate evidence to support judgements made in future ESAT submissions and ongoing school self-assessments.

Public School Review

Relationships and partnerships

The school understands the importance of positive working relationships as integral to successful schools and is working to develop further partnerships and to build on their relationships with the local community.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Positive relationships with external partners provide ease of access to services that benefit students.
- The school's willingness to share their Positive Behaviour Support processes and success with other schools is valued by School of Special Educational Need: Behaviour and Engagement.
- The school strives to build collaborative relationships with the local community. The successful strategy of going to the source in the collection of survey data was appreciated by families and provided the school with valuable feedback for reflection.
- A range of communication strategies, including the use of Facebook, home visits, and regular assemblies followed by afternoon tea, ensures choices that best meets the needs of families.
- Staff collaboration plays an important role in the school's improvement agenda. The entire school drives decision making, as evidenced by the Positive Behaviour Support committee structure.

Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Actively seek to build a positive profile within the community, promoting the good work of the school by engaging families to be part of the message.

Learning environment

Commitment to providing a safe, caring and inclusive environment for students is universally owned by staff, with the wellbeing of students being front of mind.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Positive Behaviour Support guides interactions, expectations and processes for managing student behaviour. The whole-school rewards system is engaging students in striving to be their best.
- The wellbeing of students is monitored by the deputy principal. Supporting students to be ready for learning by meeting their immediate needs is evidenced by the provision of breakfast and the 'calm down space'.
- Staff are trained in Trauma-Informed Practice, which guides whole-school processes and student support.
- The school knows their students well and the needs of those at educational risk are identified and supported. Students at educational risk are monitored through Activities in the School Information System, which provides staff with relevant information when required.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Establish a mechanism to track intervention and review for students at educational risk.
- Create a whole-school attendance strategy engaging parents in understanding the value of students attending school every day.

Leadership

Leaders are united in their efforts for school improvement and have embraced their involvement in the Fogarty EDvance School Improvement program, which is providing a framework for ongoing and sustained progress to improve student outcomes.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The school's Strategic Directions Document has been produced in consultation with staff and is being regularly reviewed for progress against annual milestones and targets.
- Role clarity and accountability is being addressed through clearly articulated processes for performance development and professional review.
- Elements of classroom observation and feedback are progressing the commitment to embed High Impact Teaching Strategies in every classroom.
- Future leaders are provided opportunities to lead. Aspirants are leading whole-school literacy and numeracy implementation and have added value and breadth to the school leadership team.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Engage the local community in developing a shared understanding of the school's vision and direction, in order to provide opportunities for family voice in school decision making.
- Work with staff in establishing a shared understanding of what quality teaching looks like, and develop a whole-school instructional framework to reduce classroom variability across the school.

Use of resources

An improved shared understanding of the planning and monitoring of financial and resource management exists between the Principal and manager corporate services. Working in collaboration ensures processes and supporting documentation are clear and reviewed regularly.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Financial management complies with the expectations of the Funding Agreement for Schools.
- Funding is deployed to support school priorities and is overseen by the Finance Committee and School Council.
- Targeted initiatives and student characteristics funding support programs to improve the academic and social and emotional needs of students.
- Attracting and retaining teaching staff is guided by the strategic direction to improve pedagogy across the school.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Establish a whole-school approach in engaging staff in resource decision making as part of annual planning against the school improvement plan priorities and targets.
- Continue to access professional learning for the Principal and manager corporate services in financial and resource management and planning.

Teaching quality

There is a collective commitment to improve the quality and consistency of teaching practice across the school, evidenced by the shared language of leaders and teaching staff.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Whole-school approaches in literacy and numeracy using evidence-based instruction, such as Spelling and Math Mastery, Explicit Direct Instruction and High Impact Teaching Strategies, are driving consistency in every classroom.
- School-based data inform teaching adjustments for students requiring differentiation. All students participate in MacqLit, and Individual Education Plans provide targeted intervention for students at educational risk.
- There is a strong focus on professional learning to build staff capacity in contemporary teaching practice. An enthusiasm in staff that have participated in the Teach Well program is engaging others in their learnings.
- Designated time is provided for phases of learning to collaborate in order to, plan, assess and moderate student learning.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Develop a whole-school pedagogical framework based on the elements currently being embedded across the school, and create a visual for use in every classroom.
- Establish a system for accountability in the rollout of whole-school agreed practices, to be guided and monitored by school leaders.

Student achievement and progress

Student attendance and achievement continue to be areas for improvement. A focus on getting students to school is required to have any impact on the school's good work in creating the right conditions for learning.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- School-based assessment data are showing progress for some students.
- Student achievement in 2019 NAPLAN¹ was above like schools in all but Grammar and Punctuation. Higher progress was seen in Spelling only; however, low student participation needs to be considered.
- The school is acutely aware of the challenges experienced by its students and is constantly seeking opportunities for student success. Students have been successful in achieving their Bronze Medallion, engagement with Geraldton TAFE², and in Structured Workplace Learning through Aboriginal school-based training.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Develop a robust attendance plan that features strategies to educate families on the importance of regular student attendance and to support student engagement with their learning.
- Set and monitor targets against school-based data sets in literacy and numeracy to more accurately make judgements on the overall impact the school is having on student achievement and progress.

Reviewers

Vicki McKeown
Director, Public School Review

Danielle Woodhouse
Principal, Wyndham District High School
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 Student Achievement and Progress domain only, will be Term 2, 2022.

The next Public School Review, inclusive of all domains, will be scheduled for Term 2, 2024.



Melesha Sands
Deputy Director General, Schools

References

- 1 National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy
- 2 Tertiary and Further Education