



Department of  
Education

D19/0293032

Public education  
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# Gascoyne Junction Remote Community School

## Public School Review

June 2019

# PUBLIC SCHOOL REVIEW

## Purpose

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All Western Australian public schools are reviewed every three years 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 that a school is operating effectively and 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.

The principal provides the review team with a self-assessment of the school's performance based on evidence gathered by the principal and staff. Information validated by the review team is considered before and during the school visit. This forms the basis for the school review report. The report is provided to the principal, the chair of the school board/council and the Regional Executive Director.

## Expectations of schools

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For all Western Australian public schools, expectations are set out in either: the Delivery and Performance Agreement, which is an agreement between the Department (represented by the Director General), school (represented by the principal) and school board (represented by the school board chair); or, the Principals' Statement of Expectations and the Funding Agreement for Schools.

## School performance rating

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This performance rating is based on information gained from the self-assessment submission and the validation process. It is focussed on a review of the following areas of school performance: relationships and partnerships; learning environment; leadership; use of resources; teaching quality; and student achievement and progress.

The school's performance rating is:

	<b>Effective</b>
	The school demonstrates effective practice in creating the conditions required for student success.

✓	<b>Needs Improvement</b>
	The school has aspects of its practice below expectations and needs supported action to improve student success.

## Context

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Gascoyne Junction Remote Community School is situated 174 kilometres east of Carnarvon and is within the Midwest Education Region.

The school caters for a small cohort of students, from Kindergarten to Year 12, residing in the town precinct, the Woodgamia Community and local pastoralist stations. The number of classes at Gascoyne Junction Remote Community School is dependent on the student cohort which can alter from term to term and year to year.

Currently the school enrolls 14 students from Kindergarten to Year 10.

In 2017, an inaugural School Council was formed to support the school.

## School self-assessment validation

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The Principal submitted a comprehensive school self-assessment.

The following aspects are confirmed:

- Staff were provided with an opportunity to discuss and reflect on the evidence submitted.
- The Principal, in consultation with the staff, demonstrated an appetite for reflective practice.
- Thoughtful consideration to the Electronic School Assessment Tool (ESAT) entries and commentary based on the attachments was insightful and very helpful for the validation phase.
- The School Council understands and accepts the value of self-assessment processes.

The following recommendations are made:

- Extend the opportunity to all staff and the School Council to add comments in the ESAT.
- Establish the ESAT as the primary 'warehouse' for school performance information and reflection with particular attention given to reviewing the impact of school operations and learning programs.

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Relationships and partnerships	
<p>Strong and respectful relationships fostered through mutual trust and acceptance are features of successful schools in remote communities. Well intended efforts to achieve sustainable levels of positive relations have yet to be established by the Gascoyne Junction Remote Community School.</p>	
Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The School Council acknowledges its role in advocating for the school to build local community confidence.</li> <li>• Greater continuity of staff has contributed to improved levels of cohesion and morale about the prospect of school improvement.</li> <li>• Teachers and non-teaching staff have a focus on building positive, trustful relationships with students.</li> <li>• Parents describe teachers as being approachable and helpful.</li> </ul>
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore options to build sustainable relations with key community agencies.</li> <li>• Investigate alternative School Council meeting times to secure improved levels of member attendance.</li> <li>• Offer a suite of parent workshops to demonstrate the learning opportunities provided for the school.</li> </ul>

Learning environment	
<p>Schools in remote communities face challenges relating to attendance, student vulnerability and behaviour. The school's focus is on building staff cohesion, establishing routine practices and turning around negative community perceptions.</p>	
Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school has a proactive approach to ensuring students have access to 21<sup>st</sup> century digital learning options.</li> <li>• Student behaviour is closely monitored. A proposed review of policy and procedures is in line with the planned update.</li> <li>• The school provides a caring environment augmented by a range of resources including a variety of playground options and a greenhouse.</li> <li>• Vulnerable students, together with those with learning difficulties, are provided with support specific to their special needs.</li> </ul>
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigate new strategies for tracking SAER<sup>1</sup>. Review associated planning documents.</li> <li>• Ensure new staff understand and follow through on attendance and behaviour management procedures.</li> <li>• Persist with the narrative about the importance of regular student attendance.</li> </ul>

## Leadership

Establishing mutually beneficial relationships in complex and diverse local communities is a challenge for school leaders. Building sustainable levels of trust and confidence with individual staff to advance a school culture of continuous school improvement is a school priority.

Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Principal exhibits a strong moral purpose and enthusiasm for school improvement.</li> <li>• The school has shown leadership in proactively using the implementation of the ACSF<sup>2</sup> as the foundation for the next phase of school planning.</li> <li>• Staff understand and accept that performance management processes involve receiving feedback on their performance.</li> <li>• The Principal has a well-developed instinct for ensuring resources available to the school are for the benefit of all students.</li> </ul>
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Principal to develop a narrative that describes the school's purpose and direction to be communicated relentlessly.</li> <li>• Explore options to widen the network of schools for professional development for all staff.</li> <li>• The Principal to develop a statement of expectations and standards in terms of instructional leadership.</li> </ul>

## Use of resources

Time and resources are allocated to enable staff to focus on teaching and learning. The volatility of student numbers adds to the complexity of managing school funds.

Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school has conducted an exhaustive audit of the impact of existing programs with a view to updating or replacement.</li> <li>• The MCS<sup>3</sup>, in partnership with the Principal, carefully manages the cost centres and budget priorities in combination with prudent management of cash flow.</li> <li>• Following some careful budget management, the school has recovered its deficit position.</li> <li>• The school responds to sudden changes in student numbers in a timely and appropriate manner.</li> </ul>
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Principal, in partnership with the MCS, to prepare a workforce management plan to be explained to staff.</li> <li>• Ensure the School Council receives timely updates of budget management decisions.</li> </ul>

## Teaching quality

Changes to staff has made it difficult to build continuity of curriculum design and delivery.	
Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As a leader with Level 3 teacher status, the Principal has the experience and skills to support teachers by offering explicit feedback on teaching practice.</li> <li>Parents acknowledged the programs offered to secondary 'tops' students, acknowledging the thoughtful consideration given to senior student needs .</li> <li>The school acknowledges the importance of establishing moderation processes with other schools to confirm standards of student achievement in relation to grade allocations.</li> <li>The school has shown an agile approach to researching special programs such as 'Back to Front' mathematics which suit small school contexts.</li> <li>Every effort has been made to offer students a range of digital learning opportunities to augment curriculum differentiation on an individual basis.</li> </ul>
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure the induction of new staff includes a focus of expectations relating to teaching practice, assessment and planning.</li> <li>The Principal to be highly visible in classrooms ensuring teachers and support staff receive structured feedback in both verbal and written formats.</li> <li>The Principal to continue to model good teaching practice in the early year's class.</li> </ul>

## Student achievement and progress

The school is acutely aware that small cohort data should be carefully considered. High levels of student transiency require accurate files of student progress are well maintained.	
Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual student records are maintained and shared with parents.</li> <li>Teachers ensure there is a balance between academic and non-academic programs.</li> <li>Teacher assistants and AIEO<sup>4</sup>s are an integral part of management of class resources to target the specific needs of students.</li> <li>Students are screened using PM<sup>5</sup> benchmarks to find their instructional level.</li> <li>Stable cohort students have responded well to the Talk for Writing approach by motivating them to write and have a better understanding of text structures.</li> </ul>
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extend the use OEAP<sup>6</sup> to Year 1 and Year 2 to monitor progress and diagnose new students arriving in the early years.</li> <li>Continue to upskill teachers in the Talk for Writing approach.</li> </ul>

## Reviewers

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Rod Lowther  
Director, Public School Review

Rebecca Instance  
Principal, Kewdale Primary School  
Peer Reviewer

## Endorsement

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Based on this report, I endorse your school performance rating of 'needs improvement'.  
Your next school review is scheduled for 2022.



Stephen Baxter  
A/Deputy Director General, Schools

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## References

- 1 Students at educational risk
- 2 Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework
- 3 Manager Corporate Services
- 4 Aboriginal and Islander Education Officer
- 5 Performance Measurements
- 6 On-entry Assessment Program