



Department of
Education

Shaping the future

High Wycombe Primary 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

Context

High Wycombe Primary School is located approximately 18 kilometres from the Perth central business district in the South Metropolitan Education Region.

The school was established in 1961. High Wycombe Primary School became an Independent Public School in 2017.

Currently there are 401 students enrolled from Kindergarten to Year 6 with many from diverse cultural backgrounds. The school has an Index of Socio-Educational Advantage of 981 (decile 6).

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

School self-assessment validation

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

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

- The overarching reflection of staff to the Electronic School Assessment Tool (ESAT) submission, was the acknowledgement of the need to prioritise data collection and analysis processes to inform planning for school programs, pedagogies and initiatives.
- Opportunities for staff engagement, for both teaching and school support staff, were valued as integral to sharing and presenting the school's self-assessment. This facilitated incorporating reflections generated through the pre-program data analysis related to the impending implementation of the Fogarty EDvance program.
- Validation day discussions reflected the need to focus on consistency and openness and to be clear about the school's current reality.
- The sentiments of staff who participated in the validation day meetings, were overwhelmingly in favour of strengthening the school's performance across all domains of the Standard.
- School Board members and community representatives were eager participants during the validation meeting, expressing a strong desire to be informed in key areas of governance including: planning; budget management; and student achievement.

The following recommendations are made:

- In future ESAT submissions, develop a collection of quality evidence that describes the essential indicators of performance, as outlined in the Standard and guided by the domain foci.
- Explore ways in which the ESAT can be used to facilitate and refine the ongoing collection and analysis of data to support school self-assessment.
- Maintain a focus on the Standard as a constant reference point for ongoing performance reflection.

Public School Review

Relationships and partnerships

Powerful school climates are frequently a product of schools' mobilising staff, parents and communities to come together for the benefit of students. Modelling the importance of building positive and caring relationships is a feature the school's drive for improvement.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Recognising the need for improved relationships with the community, the school has taken steps to introduce community-based activities, open classrooms after assemblies and an extended Kindergarten induction program.
- The school celebrates its community diversity through traditional events such as Harmony Week, a multicultural community relations initiative. These augment the classroom-based integrated curriculum, featuring cultural awareness programs.
- Recognising the importance of clear and transparent communication, the school has taken steps to improve the quality and consistency of information shared. Parents and community members acknowledged the improvement.
- The School Board has an appropriate level of understanding and acceptance of its governance responsibilities. The Board Chair has taken a lead role in advocating about the importance of strong parent representation and engagement during Board meetings.
- Survey data confirms anecdotal feedback that parents perceive their school to be focused on building positive and productive community relations.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Reintroduce open classroom evenings to further strengthen community connections and value add to Reporting to Parents.
- Consider adding a School Board parent representative to the Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) Committee.

Learning environment

Staff recognise the value of providing a culturally responsive learning environment where students and staff, working in harmony, feel valued and safe. The focus on behaviour management, attendance and engagement contributes to students' learning success.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- A diverse range of activities, external to the classroom, provide a rich vein of learning options for students.
- The chaplain is highly respected for the time spent helping and supporting students in building self-worth, emotional wellbeing and working collaboratively with staff.
- A combination of visits from Aboriginal Police Officer's, artists and dance performers have amplified the school's efforts to respond to the importance of recognising local Aboriginal stories and history.
- Documented plans are prepared to meet the needs of students at educational risk. Special Educational Need planning, case management and specialist programs provide differentiated learning options for students.
- A purposeful, considered approach to building consistent behaviour management protocols, which are understood, accepted and delivered by staff, is recognised as critical to student learning success.

Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Pursue the intended review of the behaviour management policy to bring it into alignment with the PBS approach and consolidating Good Standing with the inclusion of consequences and rewards.

Leadership

Using a SWOT¹ analysis, together with reflections, based on the National School Improvement Tool and the Standard, the school understands that consistency of performance is required. Engagement with the Fogarty EDvance Foundation demonstrates a commitment to improvement.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Feedback from a range of reflective activities has generated a series of school improvement drivers. Planning has commenced, focusing on embedding practices and programs that will develop staff capacity and capability, to use data to make informed school-wide and classroom planning decisions.
- The school's vision provides staff and students with a clear direction and a belief efficacy, based on high expectations for student achievement, health and wellbeing.
- The leadership team reviewed their roles and responsibilities, making significant adjustments to ensure aspirations for school improvement are underpinned with targeted support for staff.
- Leadership opportunities for staff have been generated to enable them to be an integral part of the Fogarty EDvance school improvement program, a key focus being to build a culture of collective school leadership.
- The Principal is widely acknowledged for insightful authentic staff consultation, being highly visible to students and parents and being 'clear-eyed' about the pathway the school must take to improve.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Provide targeted/differentiated professional learning for staff with new leadership responsibilities to ensure they develop the skills to lead.
- Maintain the School Board's positive engagement in the school improvement cycle with regular updates as a standing item in Board meetings.
- Maintain vigilance over the quality, timeliness and impact of the school's communication processes.

Use of resources

For governance processes to be effective, organisational alignment of policy, strategy and operations is crucial. In simple terms, there must be transparency in decision-making to assure integrity of resource deployment.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Adjustment to leadership roles and responsibilities has led to greater dispersal of budget responsibilities, and a better understanding of the imperatives behind the Funding Agreement for Schools.
- The Principal and manager corporate services collaborate to ensure financial and human resource decision-making is consistent with planning priorities.
- Funding for professional learning is driven by student needs and the differentiated capability needs of staff.
- Staff understand that workforce planning must prioritise student needs. Ongoing workforce planning considers the long-term needs of the school's staffing profile.
- Based on Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) data, an enterprising initiative is behind a plan to create a dedicated community 'space' for playgroups and parenting programs to assist transition to Kindergarten.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Ensure funding and planning is in place to enable newly appointed staff to receive professional learning in Seven Steps to Writing Success.
- Progress the plan to create a child-parent centre and a hub for child health providers.

Teaching quality

The school understands and accepts the value of using research and data to inform school reform required to meet the 21st century needs of students. This includes implementing research-based programs monitored through the regular collection and analysis of data.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Differentiation is informed by data, with learning adjustments made using documented plans and the implementation of explicit teaching practices more widely.
- Staff expertise and strengths are fostered and shared through collaborative engagement. Team building activities have enabled staff to demonstrate their knowledge and skill.
- The building of staff expertise has been accepted as necessary to achieve their collective aspiration to provide high quality connected teaching practice. There is a significant core of informed, talented teacher leaders to support staff in the school's quest for sustained student success.
- Following careful analysis of AEDC data, specific attention is being given to classroom planning to address declining trends in student physical health and wellbeing, social competence and increases in developmentally vulnerable students.
- The school has taken significant steps to remedy an identified lag in the use of 21st century digital learning options in classrooms. Further professional learning is planned to improve teacher confidence and competence.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Initiate training for peer observations to commence with a particular focus on giving written feedback.
- Be sure to build milestones into all medium and long term student improvement targets.

Student achievement and progress

Schools appreciate the need for unambiguous recognition that judgements about achievement and progress should be a blend of standard and school-based assessment instruments. The integrity of those judgements should be confirmed with robust, evidenced-based moderation of grade allocations.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Fogarty pre-program data analysis provided a frank assessment of what is needed for students to achieve greater success in numeracy and literacy.
- There is understanding and acceptance that, for the school to achieve consistent levels of whole-school low variance connected teaching practice, it must be adopted as a school-wide team priority.
- The leadership team and teacher leaders are committed to finding ways to support staff as they strive to improve student outcomes. They have accepted personal responsibility for driving the deep belief that improved teaching will lead to improved levels of student achievement and progress.
- A high priority has been given to professional development to build teachers and leaders data literacy.
- The Principal has identified the need to reset both the form and substance of school planning to ensure improvement targets can be monitored throughout the planning cycle.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Promote staff conversations and data informed language by introducing staff to Student Achievement Information System data maps.
- Sharpen staff awareness of the evidence-base required to make defensible grade allocation judgements.
- Give particular attention to the 'numbers, names and needs' of students at, or below, the national minimum standard.

Reviewers

Rod Lowther
Director, Public School Review

Taylor Webb
Principal, Quinns Beach Primary 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 Teaching Quality and Student Achievement and Progress domains only, will be in Term 1, 2023.

The next Public School Review, inclusive of all domains, will be scheduled for Term 1, 2025.



Melesha Sands
Deputy Director General, Schools

References

1 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats