



Department of
Education

D20/0104865

Public education
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Koorda Primary School

Public School Review

February 2020

PUBLIC SCHOOL REVIEW

Purpose

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

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

This performance rating is based on information gained from the self-assessment submission and the validation process. It is focused 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:

	Effective
	The school demonstrates effective practice in creating the conditions required for student success.
✓	Needs Improvement
	The school has aspects of its practice below expectations and needs supported action to improve student success.

Context

Koorda Primary School opened in 1920 to cater for families from a railway workers' camp in the region. The school is located 236 kilometres north-east of Perth within the Wheatbelt Education Region.

The majority of the 27 students enrolled from Kindergarten to Year 6 reside in the town of Koorda, with a small number living on outlying farms. The school has an Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage rating of 1026 (decile 3).

A significant turnover of staff, including a new principal and a graduate teacher, presents challenges and creates opportunities, which the staff and local community have embraced.

The School Council is part of the governance structure of Koorda Primary School and has input into policy and school improvement processes. The Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) is involved in numerous school events and fundraising for resources for the school.

School self-assessment validation

The principal submitted a comprehensive school self-assessment.

The following aspects are confirmed:

- Being appointed just weeks before the 2020 school year commenced, the principal has completed a remarkable effort in preparing a thoughtful and comprehensive body of school performance reflections to enable a positive and productive Public School Review process to take place.
- The school's self-assessment process facilitated a range of conversations with staff, parents and community representatives.
- Staff engagement (including a graduate teacher), in the school's self-assessment submission process, was impressive given the limited time available before submission.
- A shared understanding of current levels of achievement and progress is strong albeit in the context of the principal's recent appointment.

The following recommendations are made:

- Use the guidelines and information provided in the Electronic School Assessment Tool to embed practices of ongoing school self-assessment.
- Embark on a process of developing a culture of continuous school improvement.
- Maintain the recent disposition of achieving alignment between performance evidence, judgements made, research and strategies for improvement.

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Relationships and partnerships	
The School Council recognises the importance of its role in supporting the school, acknowledging and appreciating that the views and opinions of members are valued and respected by the school's leadership.	
Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The principal is invested in building strong professional relationships with all members of staff, modelling the value of collaboration and consultation.• A strong relational ethos both internal and external to the school is an emerging strength of the school's leader.• Despite the significant proportion of newly appointed staff the level of respect and professional support is impressive.• Parents expressed genuine appreciation and enthusiasm for the level of engagement demonstrated by the leadership and staff.• The opportunity to incorporate local senior citizens in the school community engagement program is to be commended.
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Articulate roles, responsibilities and communication processes, in order to build and sustain productive relationships within the school.• Explore options for building relationships with the local playgroup.

Learning environment	
The school has taken a prudent approach to the implementation of its Good Standing policy to ensure that new staff members and new School Council members acknowledge and accept the implications of the policy.	
Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attendance levels are largely within reasonable limits. A persistent narrative focuses on the importance of minimising absences.• Behaviour management processes are well established, with the addition of 'Zones of Regulation' as a strategy for developing student self-regulation.• It is evident that there is a positive tone in the relationships between students and staff ensuring students remain focused on their learning.• The impact of introducing '5 Golden Rules' has already been evident in the enthusiasm with which the students have embraced them.
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish school-wide practices to implement an Individual Education Plan process that ensures the cycle of identification, intervention, monitoring and review is sustained for students at educational risk.• Explore strategies for supporting students with trauma backgrounds.

Leadership	
Personal integrity, authentic transparency and a willingness to achieve win-win outcomes are traits evident in the principal's leadership.	
Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The principal has demonstrated a capacity to 'quietly' influence change. • There is a strong focus on the concept of distributed leadership with staff being trusted, due to their commitment and enthusiasm, to add value to the school. • The school community, through the School Council, has embraced the leadership style of the principal, expressing confidence in her capacity to be a force for positive change within their school. • The principal demonstrated insight and understanding of the reality of where the school is in its cycle of improvement.
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to promote values of respect for the community and civil collaboration within the school to ensure the school is recognised not only as a place for student learning, but a place for adult learning. • Examine options for building a culture of performance management that promotes professional growth and development.

Use of resources	
The principal has responded in a timely way to identifying and accessing professional learning to strengthen her knowledge, understandings and skill in financial and budget management.	
Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an authentic willingness on the part of the principal and the manager corporate services (MCS) to work collaboratively in their respective areas of expertise. • The willingness of the MCS to share knowledge and experience is an important step to ensuring there is school-wide understanding of the complexities of deploying the school's resources in a timely and appropriate manner. • The image and reputation of the school is reflected in the desire of the School Council and P&C to ensure the school's appearance, as a public asset, is of a high quality. • The school is demonstrating a willingness to retire old assets and resources in favour of freeing up funds to introduce research-based resources that meet the needs of 21st century student learning.
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Widen the composition of the Finance Committee to facilitate greater input and understanding across the school as to how resources can be best deployed. • Ensure the School Council is provided with comprehensive information related to the use of school funds that enable priorities to be met.

Teaching quality

The multi-grade environment, typical of small Level 3 schools, has strengthened both the motivation and the understanding of delivering a differentiated program of learning that meets the needs of all students.

Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective and genuinely supportive relationships are emerging amongst the teachers, and between the teaching staff and the education assistants. • Staff intuitively accept their professional obligation to be accountable to the students and to each other. • The practice of classroom observations has been established as part of the routine of improving the craft of all teaching staff. • The principal has demonstrated a willingness to engage directly with staff in the classroom, both to model good teaching practice and to provide instructive feedback following classroom observations. • The introduction of commercial programs such as Letters and Sounds is predicated on research and the needs of the students.
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review all school curriculum planning to maximise the capacity for staff to translate the planning into classroom action. • Consider ways to ensure staff are continually engaged in collaborative processes, both internally and with other network schools and beyond.

Student achievement and progress

The school is exploring options for providing parents with reliable information about their child's progress and to establish a shared appreciation for how grades are allocated.

Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a positive disposition expressed by staff that classroom planning should be based on evidence, both direct and indirect, to meet the targeted needs of each student. • The principal understands that with a newly appointed teacher and a graduate teacher, developing the capacity of staff to make sure data is used to inform classroom planning, is essential. • While comparative data is unreliable, due to small student cohorts, the school is relying on progress and achievement in relation to the stable cohorts. • Giving a staff member the opportunity to lead the school in National Quality Standard evaluations, in combination with local school networks, is an example of the principal's commitment to distributing leadership.
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pursue all data collection opportunities for individual students, to ensure target setting for their progress is reliable. • Seek opportunities to incorporate strategies that extend capable students.

Reviewers

Rod Lowther
Director, Public School Review

Jemma Temby
Principal, Lancelin Primary School
Peer Reviewer

Endorsement

Based on this report, I endorse your school performance rating of 'Needs Improvement'.

Your next school review is scheduled for 2023.



Stephen Baxter
Deputy Director General, Schools