



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Education**

Lake Gwelup Primary School

2017

Review Findings



Independent Public School Review

Disclaimer

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School and Review Details

Principal:	Mr Greg Clarke
Board Chair:	Ms Andrea Colthart
School Address:	59 Porter Street, Gwelup WA 6018
Number of Students:	484
ICSEA¹	1115 (1)
Reviewers:	Ms Cris Sandri (Lead) Professor Marion Milton
Review Dates:	31 July and 1 August 2017

Purpose of the Review

The purpose of this review is to provide assurance to the principal and school community, the board and the Director General of the Department of Education of the extent to which the school staff and board have met the commitments of the Delivery and Performance Agreement (DPA). The review verifies the degree to which there are effective processes in place bringing about improved student learning.

¹ The Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) is a scale of socio-educational advantage that is computed for each school. It allows for comparisons to be made between schools that are matched according to their socio-educational advantage, allowing fair comparisons of NAPLAN results between schools with students who have a similar ICSEA. The median ICSEA value is 1000.
http://www.acara.edu.au/resources/Fact_Sheet_-_About_ICSEA.pdf

Review Methodology

Underpinning the review methodology is the understanding that the principal is required to ensure the roles and responsibilities of the DPA are met; school performance and student improvement targets and priorities, as detailed in the school's business plan, are assessed, reviewed annually and an annual report made publicly available. The review seeks to determine the extent to which these commitments have been met.

The principal provided the school self-review conclusions to the reviewers one month prior to the commencement of the review.

The reviewers supplemented the information provided by the principal with information on the school's achievements, its processes and its student performance data from a number of sources which included:

- the *My School*[®] website
- School Performance Monitoring
- Schools Online reports.

Reviewers analysed the evidence presented in the school self-review documentation to verify achievement of the DPA and business plan commitments, and developed lines of inquiry where further in-school verification was required.

An agenda for the site visit was negotiated with the principal to enable the gathering of evidence to verify claims made in the school self-review statements. During the review visit the reviewers sourced evidence to support the claims through observation and discussion with leaders, teaching and support staff, board members, parents and students where required. Where the school belongs to an Independent Public School (IPS) cluster of schools the review considers whether the purpose of the cluster has been met and the benefits to the school.

The evidence provided by the principal, along with information gathered by the reviewers prior to and during the review visit, was used as the basis for judgements made in verifying how well the school staff and board have met the commitments of the DPA and business plan.

Business Plan

How effective was the business plan in responding to the school's context and improving student learning (progress, achievement and engagement)?

Lake Gwelup Primary School community is proud of its 103 year-old history and the strong culture of parent involvement and support. With the exception of the original old school classroom, the school was completely rebuilt in 2012 on the existing school site. The current school campus is aesthetically pleasing, well maintained and designed to retain the historical links to its Aboriginal, rural and market garden past. It was evident that this contemporary and well-resourced learning and teaching environment is an enabler to facilitate, refine and improve school practices and procedures.

Student numbers have steadily increased due principally to the initial redevelopment of land in the area. Current enrolment as at June 2017 is 484 students and is expected to remain steady. The school has an ICSEA of 1115 with overall student attendance rates remaining above those of like-schools and Western Australian public schools.

Meetings with staff, parents and the board indicate that leadership instability has challenged the school community since becoming an IPS in 2015, with seven senior administration changes. The selection and appointment of the substantive principal in mid-2016 has provided the community with stability, focused direction and empowerment in the initiation and implementation of change and the ongoing cycle of improvement in the school.

Findings

- The draft 2015 Business Plan was reviewed in Semester 1 of 2016 for endorsement by the board. Though the focus areas identified in the original plan were not compromised, targets were clarified and a set of strategies and key performance indicators were added in collaboration with the staff and school board. This version was endorsed by the board mid-2016. It outlines the strategic approach for the school and describes four key focus areas, student improvement targets, strategies to achieve these targets and some complementary key performance indicators.
- The current business plan is available to the school community on the school website, electronically on request, or as a hard copy in the front office.
- Critical review of the current business plan in 2017 identified targets and strategies that were achieved, not achieved, no longer relevant or still ongoing. Similar analysis occurred for some of the key performance indicators. On

reflection, the staff, leadership team and board have acknowledged that several of the targets were difficult to measure and ambiguous; emphasis had been placed on the achievement of the strategies and there was no clear differentiation between the strategic targets and operational strategies.

Consequently, the school self-review has judged that of the 18 targets set, nine have been achieved and nine are ongoing or partly achieved. The lack of clarity in the business plan has limited its effectiveness. Clear links between the DPA, business plan, operational and classroom planning could be advantageous.

Area for improvement

- Ensure business plan targets in all focus areas are explicit, measurable and intended to have maximum impact on student and school improvement.

Teaching and Learning

How has the quality of teaching improved and sustained student learning (progress, achievement and engagement)?

Findings

- Student achievement is a focus in the school and there is an expectation that the performance of all students will be improved. Areas in which students do not perform are identified and addressed. Students who require adjustments to their learning program as identified in On-entry assessments, or who receive D and E grades, show progress through individual education plans (IEPs) or group education plans (GEPs). Progress is monitored regularly by classroom teachers and through 'case conferences' organised by a committed students at educational risk (SAER) team. Discussions with members of the SAER team, class teachers and education assistants (EAs) confirm that progress is ongoing and appropriate for the children on IEPs. Students who need extension may have GEPs and extension classes.
- The school motto is "Integrity and Excellence" which underpins the school priorities of "successful students", "excellence in teaching" and "engaged partnerships and community". High expectations are held for all students to achieve their potential. Discussions with the leadership team and phase teams (Years K–2 and Years 3–6) indicated that student achievement is monitored at the individual level and strategies and resources are generated to increase student knowledge and improve performance.
- A review of business plan targets was undertaken; however, due to the wording of some targets, achievement was not always clear or measurable and progress towards most targets was considered to be ongoing.
- The first target for the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) was "Maintain or increase the average Years 3–5 cohort progress in the NAPLAN tests by like-schools' progress or above." This target was achieved for reading, writing and spelling but not for numeracy and grammar and punctuation.
- The second target was "Increase the number of students of our stable cohort in the top 20% of Australia to 30% or above for (the) 2014–16 cohort and 30% or above for (the) 2015–17 cohort." NAPLAN data for 2016 indicated that in numeracy, 39% of students in Year 3 achieved in the top 205 of all Australian schools, with a group mean of 461 compared to the all Australian mean of 402.

Year 5 had 30% of students achieving in the top 20% of all Australian schools, with a group mean of 520 compared to the all Australian mean of 493.

- In literacy, Year 3 data showed mean achievement above the all Australian mean in reading at 461 compared to 426, writing at 452 compared to 421, spelling at 431 compared to 420, and grammar and punctuation at 473 compared to 436. The Year 5 data showed similar results, with mean achievement above the all Australian mean in reading at 522 compared to 502, writing at 504 compared to 476, spelling at 517 compared to 493 and grammar and punctuation at 523 compared to 505.
- Student numbers in the top 20% were comparable to like-schools in 2016 except for Year 5 spelling and grammar and punctuation which were below like-schools.
- In another section of the business plan, under “successful students”, a different NAPLAN target is listed: “Raise our school’s NAPLAN mean scores for English and mathematics to be 10% above the Australian mean.” This target was assessed as ongoing by the leadership team.
- The On-entry target was a strategy, and not able to be measured.
- The target in science was for Years 3–6 students to demonstrate year level average improvement on Primary Assessment Tests (PAT), with “90% of Years 3, 4, 5, 6 students to achieve stanine 4 or above.” Data indicates that the percentage of students who achieved above the standard was 80% in Year 3, 77% in Year 4, 67% in Year 5 and 71% in Year 6. In the 2015 Annual Report class averages on the PAT are given and in the 2016 Annual Report teacher grades in science are reported.
- In music, the target was “Year 6 students to be at or above (the) Australian cohort score in (the) Music Aptitude Indicator Assessment”. As the music specialist explained, the assessment is given not to Year 6 students but to Year 4 students to determine suitability for the School of Instrumental Music. No comparative data is available to the school to judge achievement of this target.
- The target for physical education was “85% of students to be at or above (the) minimum standards set by (the) Western Australian School Curriculum and Standards Authority.” The minimum is interpreted by the school to be in fundamental movement skills to Year 3. Progress is ongoing.
- Despite the difficulties in measuring the overall targets in the business plan, key performance indicators listed for NAPLAN data were able to be measured, and were either achieved or close to the achievement target.

- The 2017 Operational Plan documents a cycle of ongoing teaching and assessment as well as staff responsibilities for monitoring student learning. A renewed focus on quality teaching and co-coaching as described in the 2017 Operational Plan provides the means for teachers to use student performance data for instructional purposes and to provide relevant feedback on progress to students.
- In non-academic areas, attendance is above like-schools and Western Australian public schools in all categories in each year of the Business Plan 2015–17. There are very few students in the 'severe' category, and there is a policy and procedures in place to increase the attendance of children in the moderate category. Likewise, behaviour is not an issue and parents and students confirmed that any difficulties are dealt with promptly and effectively.
- Teacher collaboration is fostered throughout the school within phase teams that meet at least twice per term, year level teams that meet weekly, and learning area teams and the SAER team that meet at least once per term. During the current business plan period, a review of the effectiveness of resources and strategies in relation to student outcomes in English and mathematics in particular, has led to several changes. Whole-school approaches and the development of consistency and coherence, across and within year levels, are gradually being introduced. Literacy and numeracy blocks across the school have been introduced. Whole-school scope and sequence documents have been, or are in the process of being developed by various learning area teams. This is followed by collaborative planning at the year and phase level. Co-coaching has been adopted and teachers who spoke with reviewers indicated that they find it beneficial, as it further develops their teaching practices. The leadership team is commended on the modelling and development of effective collaboration within the teams, which is leading to a more intense focus on quality teaching and increasing the learning of all students.
- Annual performance reviews are held for all staff. Reviews for teaching staff focus on self-reflection through the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers.
- Data coaches are assisting all teachers to interrogate the outcome data for students in their classes and at whole-school level so that all teachers may use evidence-based practice.
- A strong leadership team, distributed leadership opportunities through phase, year level and learning area teams along with identified 'champions' in areas such as technology ensure that the new structures and protocols will lead to sustainable practices. The reviewers acknowledge and support the leadership

team's intention to have a consolidation phase for newly introduced content, strategies and resources for teaching, prior to the introduction of further innovations.

Areas of strength

- Strong leadership that is providing vision, purpose and clear direction.
- Strength of the leadership team and staff leaders in facilitating and supporting major organisational and pedagogical change.
- Merit selection appointments have complemented the collective expertise of staff to support teaching and learning initiatives.
- Willingness and enthusiasm of staff to engage in the acquisition and refinement of contemporary practices.
- Focus on technology and data coaching.
- Distributed leadership, modelling and developing a collaborative approach to teaching and learning across the school.

Areas for improvement

- Facilitate a consolidation phase for newly introduced content, strategies and resources for teaching, prior to the introduction of further innovations.
- Ensure that all teachers are aware of links between new programs/resources and the requirements of the Western Australian Curriculum and Assessment Outline.
- Continue to focus on learning areas identified in the self-review and NAPLAN data as requiring improvement, particularly in literacy and numeracy.

Student Performance Monitoring

How well established are the school's self-assessment practices in accounting for school improvement?

Findings

- The annual reports for 2015 and 2016 list school performance and student improvement targets and priorities and provide data to demonstrate achievement of, or progress towards those targets. They indicate that student improvement targets are assessed through ongoing assessments and reviewed annually as outlined in the Business Plan 2015–17 and 2017 Operational Plan.
- Discussions with the principal and leadership team indicated the extent to which student learning is monitored and teachers are supported to make evidence-based, instructional decisions and to provide relevant and timely feedback to students on their progress. Classroom teachers also monitor student progress through a range of other measures. The K–2 Phase team used the external verification National Quality Standard audit to identify specific changes that needed to be made to fully meet the standard. They also backward mapped areas of need from Year 3 NAPLAN data. This information was then linked to early years scope and sequence charts in literacy and numeracy. PAT is used in Years 2–6 for literacy and numeracy and in Years 3–6 in science. Teacher judgements are used and reported in science, humanities and social science (HASS), health and physical education, music and languages other than English (Japanese). Teacher judgements in English and mathematics are compared with NAPLAN results.
- Reports on the My School website indicate that teacher judgements are not well aligned with NAPLAN results. This was most noticeable in reading and writing in which teacher judgements were between 15% and 57% below students' results in NAPLAN. The results were closer in numeracy, but teachers tended to give higher grades than NAPLAN scores. Continued moderation and comparison is encouraged to redress this discrepancy.
- Recent adoption of John Hattie's visible learning strategies have been introduced school-wide. The current focus for teachers is practising the implementation of the teaching elements of the 'i' in the i-STAR model. The use of "What am I learning today?" and "What am I looking for?" learning questions was apparent in the classrooms visited, as was ongoing monitoring of student understanding.

- Continuous and increasingly rigorous self-assessment processes are being developed through team meetings and school development days to verify the performance of the school. Operational plan targets are monitored and updated annually.
- The annual reports for 2015 and 2016 are made publicly available on the school website. The reports display the results of NAPLAN assessments compared to like-schools, Australian schools and assessments in other learning areas. The reports address some of the business plan targets and also indicate the focus for the coming year to improve student performance in indicated areas of need. The reviewers acknowledge the leadership team's understanding that to make goal achievement clearer, the next business plan will adopt targets that are more easily measurable and that have clear links to the DPA and the operational plan.
- The self-review indicates that ongoing student monitoring is part of the learning and teaching cycle and linked to performance management. Data coaching is provided for staff through an external provider and co-coaching. The distributed leadership model and team approaches to using data in a practical way should ensure sustainability of student monitoring.

Areas of strength

- Thorough and detailed level of data interrogation by the leadership team and senior staff across the school.
- Commitment to upskill all teaching staff to pinpoint areas of learning that need to be addressed with cohorts and individuals.

Areas for improvement

- Align the DPA, business plan and operational plan to make achievement of targets easier to measure.
- Develop strategies to better align teacher judgements to student progress and achievement.

Program Delivery

How well has the school performed in providing education programs that promote learning and wellbeing for all students?

Findings

- The principal and staff have designed programs following the Western Australian Curriculum and Assessment Outline to meet the needs of students in accordance with the requirements of the *School Education Act 1999*, *School Education Regulations 2000* and the *School Curriculum and Standards Authority Act 1997*.
- Policies and practices are in place to support the safety and welfare of students on school premises and while offsite on school excursions. This is evident in the self-review evidence documents, parent information booklet and the student health and welfare plan. Discussions with staff indicated that excursion and risk management policies are reviewed annually and first aid training is provided for staff when necessary.
- The chaplain delivers the Build Up Zone (BUZ) program from Years 1–6 which supports students' social, emotional and resilience development. Discussions with parents and students indicated that there were virtually no bullying problems and that processes and procedures are in place so that any difficulties that arise are dealt with quickly and appropriately.
- Champion Dads was introduced to the school in 2015 in partnership with the Fathering Project to help fathers and father figures realise their importance in children's lives. It continues to be strongly supported and valued by the school community.
- The music program, that includes large choirs, builds self-esteem. Whole-school daily fitness has been introduced to encourage health and wellbeing.
- Student leadership is a focus in the school and students have several opportunities to develop leadership skills as student counsellors, BUZ rangers, faction captains and as learning buddies with junior students. Students who spoke with reviewers indicated that they value these opportunities and they were able to describe some of the interactive personal and leadership skills they had learned particularly as BUZ rangers.

- Comprehensive operational plans and clearly delineated roles and responsibilities for staff underpin effective day-to-day management. The self-review indicates that through distributed leadership the deputies and senior teachers have responsibility for ensuring that programs are delivered efficiently and monitored in a timely manner. Co-coaching has been introduced which, along with self-reflection and performance management, contributes to effective teaching and program delivery.
- Routines and responsibilities have been established to support a safe and orderly environment. The parent information booklet indicates that teachers have received training in ensuring student health and behavioural issues are addressed in an age appropriate manner.
- The attention to all areas of the curriculum in the operational plans, whole-school approaches to English, mathematics, science and HASS have been developed to introduce coherence, consistency and common language in subject areas. Organisation of teams, aspirant Level 3 classroom teachers who take on specific focus areas, along with distributed leadership, engender sustainable programs and practices to promote student learning, health and wellbeing.
- The results from surveys conducted with parents and carers, staff and students indicate generally high levels of satisfaction with both academic and non-academic programs delivered at the school, and identified areas for improvement. This was verified in interviews conducted by reviewers with board members, parents and carers, staff and students. The school is working to address these areas, for example by using Connect to improve communication between school and home.

Areas of strength

- The use of literacy and numeracy blocks and differentiation of the curriculum in these areas.
- Programs that promote student leadership, health and wellbeing.
- Community support for programs that develop the whole child.

Areas for improvement

- Continue to implement whole-school approaches to teaching and learning.
- Continue to implement evidence-based programs and teaching.

Resourcing and Support

How well has the school established systems to monitor and review the allocation of resources to meet strategic and operational priorities?

Findings

- In addition to system requirements, allocated school financial resources are regularly reviewed, monitored and reported through weekly administration meetings, finance committee meetings and monthly reports to the school board. Strong management systems are in place to successfully ensure strategic allocations remain viable and transparent.
- The school receives targeted funds for the chaplaincy program. Extra time for an EA has been purchased in response to the demand for student learning assistance.
- Facilities are made available to the community through formal leasing arrangements including an agreement with YMCA to provide before and after-school care.
- The leadership team acknowledges that workforce planning is an important element of business planning. The team accesses longitudinal staff employment data provided through the Department of Education to aid in workforce planning. The board, through a subcommittee participates in reviewing workforce data and making recommendations. A documented school plan to ensure effective and appropriate human resource planning and management is developing. A merit selection process for staff resulted in seven teachers beginning in February 2017 to ensure sustainability of current and intended program delivery that promotes learning and wellbeing for all students.
- The school, together with the financial contribution from the Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C), is well positioned to sustain the current and intended program delivery. The parent body is active in raising funds towards projects to improve the school grounds and environment and for additional teaching and learning resources.

Area of strength

- Sound financial management processes are in place.

Area for improvement

- Complete the workforce plan strategic overview.

School Board

How effective has the board been in carrying out its functions, roles and responsibilities?

Findings

- Board membership is representative of the school community and includes members with varied expertise and diverse backgrounds. It complies with the *School Education Act 1999* and *School Education Regulations 2000* regarding membership categories and composition.
- The board participates in:
 - the endorsement of the DPA
 - the review and endorsement of the school's annual report
 - the endorsement and review of the school budget
 - a process for development and endorsement of the business plan
 - processes to review school performance and respond to assessment data
 - the review, development and endorsement of school policies
 - processes to determine satisfaction levels of parents, staff and students, with results reported in the school's annual report
 - the selection of staff and the principal
 - the development of the school's brand, most recently a new school motto, updated logo and change of uniform.
- Board members understand and fulfil their functions and role as prescribed in the *School Education Act 1999*, *School Education Regulations 2000* and Department of Education policy. Board members expressed an interest in re-examining how these can be further developed as the school moves into its second DPA and strategic planning cycle.
- The board receives:
 - relevant monthly financial reports
 - the results of any school audits and reviews
 - advice from the leadership team on school performance and student improvement targets, as detailed in the school's business plan.

- To ensure the sustainability of its membership and practices, staggered terms have been introduced to ensure succession planning and appropriate turnover. The board expressed the need to refine the induction process for new board members and include participation in the Department of Education board training modules for all members.
- In reviewing its own performance, a self-evaluation has been completed by the board during this DPA cycle and used to identify areas for improvement, and to gauge the board's effectiveness.
- A close relationship exists between the board and the P&C with aligned strategic priorities.
- The board endeavours to communicate with the broader school community regarding the board's function and activities through newsletter updates, school parent information booklet, open meetings and participation at school parent question and answer sessions.

Area of strength

- A committed and capable board with strong leadership who assist the leadership team to implement and drive a clear improvement agenda focused on excellence in teaching and learning, reflecting the high expectations of the community.

Areas for improvement

- Refine the induction process for new and existing board members.
- Re-examine how the board's roles and functions can be further developed as the school moves into its second DPA and strategic planning cycle.
- Explore means to enhance the board's communication with the broader school community regarding its function, activities and the progress made towards business plan targets.

Conclusion

Lake Gwelup Primary School remains a high functioning school with strong support and engagement of the community. Parents and staff have high expectations of successful teaching, learning, engagement and wellbeing for all students. This is supported by committed, knowledgeable, strong and focused leadership at both board and school level.

Staff demonstrate a renewed focus on developing their expertise to provide a productive learning environment for their students that is safe, caring and academically and socially engaging. They are engaged in developing a whole-school curriculum focus in a collegiate culture. The community values the availability and openness of the leadership and staff, the positive school tone and emphasis on each individual student's wellbeing.

In reviewing the current business plan, the board, leadership team and school staff have acknowledged the need to refine strategic planning and target setting, to ensure clarity and relevance.

It was evident to the reviewers that Lake Gwelup Primary School is an effective school. The board, school leadership and staff are united, enthusiastic and committed to school improvement. The reviewers are confident that the school is well placed and has the focus, capacity and community support to maintain current achievements and provide for realistic future improvements.

Declaration

We confirm the information in this document is, to the best of our knowledge and based on the verification of the evidence provided by Lake Gwelup Primary School, true and correct.

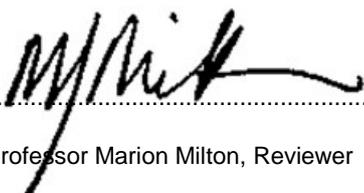
The principal and board chair have had an opportunity to comment on any matters of fact contained within this document.



Ms Cris Sandri, Lead Reviewer

14 September 2017

Date



Professor Marion Milton, Reviewer

12 September 2017

Date



Mr Ken Perris, Director,
Independent Public School Review

22 September 2017

Date