Department of Education

GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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West Northam Primary School

Public School Review

May 2019

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 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:

✔	**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

West Northam Primary School is located in the town of Northam, 97 kilometres north-east of Perth within the Wheatbelt Education Region. Opening in 1906, the school was rebuilt at a new site in 1962.

With an Index of Community and Socio-Educational Advantage rating of 796, the school currently enrols 128 students from Kindergarten to Year 6.

Approximately half of the students are Aboriginal, supported by a full-time Aboriginal and Islander Education Officer (AIEO), who teaches the Noongar language. An Aboriginal mentor supports the teaching of social skills.

Families are invited to work in educational partnership with the school through the Parents and Citizens' Association and the School Council.

School self-assessment validation

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

The following aspects are confirmed:

- A wide scope and multiple sources of credible evidence were selected for analysis.

- Comprehensive narratives for domains listed within the ESAT[1], provided as part of the school's evidence, added value and clarity to the submission.

- Alignment between the school's evidence, observations and judgements about their performance, was apparent in the submission.

- Actions for improvement described in the school's self-assessment documentation, were elaborated on during the validation phase.

- A culture of self-assessment and subsequent improvement planning is developing in the school.

The following recommendation is made:

- Engage staff collaboratively in the process of school self-assessment through extending the opportunity to analyse evidence and contribute insights into the ESAT.

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Relationships and partnerships

Building a culture of connection is a priority for the school. To this end, the leaders have adopted a targeted, personalised strategy, engaging in one-on-one communications at every opportunity to encourage parental involvement in the school and their children's learning.

Effectiveness	The review team validate the following: • Strong personal bonds and high levels of professional engagement between staff underpin an emerging culture of trust and respect. • Student voice is valued in the management of the school and the opinions of staff and parents are sought, valued and acted upon in a timely manner. • Parents describe the school's communications as reliable and effective. They appreciate the school's commitment to timely follow up and follow through of issues raised. • Staff express that they feel valued and supported by colleagues and the school leaders. • Parents value and appreciate the availability of teachers to discuss their children's progress • The AIEO and Aboriginal EA[2] are valued members of staff who are seen as integral to building effective relationships between the school and Aboriginal community.
Improvements	The review team support the following actions: • Ensure co-opted members of the School Council are supported through ongoing training and development. • Continue to pursue opportunities to improve parent engagement in the school and School Council.

Learning environment

The school's documented commitments to creating a safe and supportive learning environment in which student's individual needs and wellbeing are accommodated, are enacted through the daily actions of staff.

Effectiveness	The review team validate the following: • A comprehensive case management process is embedded and staff receive high quality assistance in supporting SAER[3]. • A targeted social and emotional program delivered by an Aboriginal mentor supports the development of social skills in older Aboriginal boys. • Zones of Regulation supports 'at risk' students in the senior school. • The PBS[4] program is well understood, embedded as connected practice and supported by the 1-2-3 Magic program as a purposeful response to behaviour. • Behaviour data is used in an authentic and purposeful way to support the explicit teaching of expected values and behaviours.
Improvements	The review team support the following actions: • Build sustainability of case management through clear documentation. • Support the school-wide implementation of Zones of Regulation.

Leadership

The school's leaders are united and purposeful in their leadership of the school. Their personal authenticity and commitment to their students, staff and broader community has built confidence in the school's direction and a collective responsibility for school improvement.

Effectiveness	The review team validate the following:
	• The Principal demonstrates a clear understanding of effective change management practices.
	• A distributed leadership model creates meaningful opportunities to build staff capacity and engagement in the school improvement agenda.
	• Professional learning is well planned and targeted to school needs. Lead teachers support staff through in-class coaching and modelling and provide assistance with planning and assessment.
	• Performance management systems are aligned to the AITSL[5] Australian Professional Standards for Teachers and relevant job description statements for support staff.
	• Teachers receive feedback on performance management goals through a classroom observation process.
	• The integration of the ACSF[6] into the strategic plans underpins dedicated efforts to enhance the school's cultural responsiveness.
Improvements	The review team support the following actions:
	• Strengthen performance management processes to include reflection against school priorities and agreed whole-school approaches.
	• In consultation with staff, use whole-school and system data to revise targets in the strategic plan.

Use of resources

The Principal and MCS[7] are mindful that consideration needs to be given to the School Funding Agreement to ensure that the school's financial planning meets requirements and is actioned in a formalised and targeted manner.

Effectiveness	The review team validate the following:
	• The Principal and MCS work together to provide appropriate oversight of the day-to-day management of resources.
	• The Finance Committee, comprising a balanced representation of all phases of learning, are well supported to fulfil their roles.
	• Cost centre managers receive advice and training from the MCS to ensure their financial management practices align with required protocols.
	• The Principal understands contextual workforce challenges and manages these effectively.
	• Targeted recruitment practices are employed to reflect the school's context and support identified areas of need.
Improvements	The review team support the following actions:
	• With the support of staff from SSEN:D[8] develop whole-staff understanding for determining NCCD[9] categories and levels of adjustment.
	• Ensure budget allocations are planned for and informed by strategic and operational planning.

Teaching quality

Staff are skilled and enthusiastic learners who share a personal and collective commitment to improving their practice to enhance outcomes for all students. The emergence of quality instructional leaders is acknowledged and valued by staff.

Effectiveness	The review team validate the following: • Quality teaching is fostered through the establishment of a coaching culture aimed at supporting the development of connected, school-wide practice. • Whole-school approaches have been collaboratively determined and implementation has commenced through appropriate planning and support. • A culture of collegiality is evident in the quality of teacher collaboration focussed on student achievement and progress. Teachers enjoy high levels of peer support when implementing agreed whole-school programs. • The value of an explicit pedagogy is acknowledged by staff and has been adopted widely through the school's strategic planning. • Teachers use school and program data effectively to track student progress, implement case management and inform differentiated practice.
Improvements	The review team support the following actions: • Continue to embed whole-school approaches through a balance of ongoing support and accountability. • Align classroom observations to the agreed explicit pedagogy to enhance the quality of teacher feedback and build consistency of understanding and practice. • Facilitate the authentic engagement of ECE[10] staff in the auditing and planning associated with the National Quality Standard.

Student achievement and progress

School leaders understand student performance data and acknowledge the need to exercise caution when using system data in schools with small and transient cohorts. In response they are developing alternative data sets that are appropriate to their size and context.

Effectiveness	The review team validate the following: • A whole-school assessment schedule drives the collection of school and system data to inform classroom planning and collaborative discussions. • The leaders have used a range of data effectively to describe the school's longitudinal performance and identify areas of strength and need. • Due to high transiency rates, stable cohort data is privileged and used to demonstrate the impact of the school's programs and strategies. • Staff use student performance data effectively to identify students for targeted classroom intervention. • Effective handover processes ensure high performing students are monitored and extended in their learning. • The Brightpath model supports teacher moderation in writing.
Improvements	The review team support the following actions: • Further build and develop the capacity of staff to use system and school data to inform target setting within strategic and operational plans. • Investigate opportunities to moderate with colleagues from local schools.

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Reviewers

Jim Bell
Director, Public School Review

Narelle Ward
Principal, Cassia Primary School
Peer Reviewer

Endorsement

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

Your next school review is scheduled for 2022.

Stephen Baxter
A/Deputy Director General, Schools

References
1   Electronic School Assessment Tool
2   Education Assistant
3   Students at Educational Risk
4   Positive Behaviour Support
5   Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership
6   Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework
7   Manager Corporate Services
8   School of Special Educational Needs: Disability
9   Nationally Consistent Collection of Data
10 Early Childhood Education