



Government of Western Australia
Department of Education

Wilson Park Primary School

2017

Review Findings



Independent Public School Review

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School and Review Details

Principal:	Ms Christine Gorman
Board Chair:	Mr Paul Reuben
School Address:	Porter Street, Collie WA 6225
Number of Students:	110
ICSEA¹	849
Reviewers:	Mr John Iacomella (Lead) Ms Margaret Brede
Review Dates:	31 October and 1 November 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)?

Context

Wilson Park Primary School opened in 1963 and is one of the three primary schools in the Collie township. The original school was destroyed in a fire in 2009 and students were temporarily located at a nearby primary school while the replacement school was built. In 2011 students moved into the new buildings with the latest in primary school design and facilities. The Child and Parent Centre for parents with children aged from 0–8 years is co-located with the school.

The Department of Education's Expert Review Group completed a report on the school in 2011. The principal advised reviewers that one reason for this was unsatisfactory literacy and numeracy results in the early childhood years and in Year 3.

Fifty per cent of students receive support from the Smith Family in terms of family support, learning clubs and scholarships.

The school has a transiency rate of over 33% per year. Most of these students leave town but some move to other schools in Collie.

Aboriginal students comprise 32% of the enrolment and 2% of students have a language background other than English.

Seven per cent of families pay the annual voluntary contributions. Ninety per cent of Year 6 students continue their secondary education at Collie Senior High School.

Findings

- The school's vision is "success for all in life and learning". To support and achieve this vision the business plan lists nine attributes that are features of the school. These attributes include "fun and laughter", "high quality teaching" and "differentiated learning". The business plan lists eight beliefs that are to assist all students to learn. These beliefs focus on students ("children receive constructive critical feedback"), on teachers ("teachers clearly articulate the outcome of each lesson") and on programs ("whole behaviour management is positive and consistently implemented").

- The business plan details three school priorities developed in consultation with the staff but presented to the school board only for endorsement. Literacy and numeracy targets are that by 2017 the writing/numeracy trend lines in Years 3 and 5 National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) will be above zero. Discussions with board members and parents indicated limited understanding of these targets.
- The structure of the business plan with statement of the vision, beliefs and the three school priorities does give the school community the opportunity to understand the strategic direction and an overview of the programs to be implemented at the school. However, the targets for the priority areas need to be written in a way that makes them understandable by the school community and measurable in terms of improvement to student learning outcomes.
- The most significant program in the school in terms of school operations and teacher effort and time is the Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) framework, which receives limited reference in the business plan.
- The 2015 and 2016 annual reports outline the extent to which the business plan targets have been met. Each target is displayed as a graph with a summary statement indicating whether the target has been met.
- The business plan is available to the community through printed copy.

Area of strength

- Teaching strategies and programs in the business plan are clearly listed and relevant to achieving the targets.

Area for improvement

- Rewrite student targets so that they are meaningful to all in the school community and indicate measures of improvement in student learning.

Teaching and Learning

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

Findings

- Student NAPLAN performance has been inconsistent for the period of the Business Plan 2015–17:
 - average numeracy scores in 2016 were above like-schools for Year 3 and Year 5 but in 2017 the average scores for both groups fell to below like-schools
 - in 2016 average reading scores were above like-schools for Year 3 and Year 5 but in 2017 Year 3 average scores were below like-schools and Year 5 equal to like-schools
 - average writing and spelling scores in 2016 were above like-schools for Year 3 and below like-schools for Year 5 but in 2017 average scores for both groups were below like-schools
 - in 2016 average grammar and punctuation scores were above like-schools for both Year 3 and Year 5 but in 2017 Year 3 scores fell below like-schools (although Year 5 average scores remained above).
- The school’s operational plan, the Procedural Plan 2015–17, identifies raising expectations as one of six key initiatives with associated strategies and timelines. The 2016 survey item “my teacher expects me to do my best” scored the highest rating in the student and parent responses and was among the highest ranked score for the staff responses. Students and parents confirmed results in their discussions with the reviewers.
- The school’s timetable does not enable collaborative planning time for staff. There is a reliance on informal conversations both between phases of learning teachers and between the job share teaching partners. Discussions with teachers indicated evidence of communication breakdowns through this informal approach and inconsistency in the implementation of teaching strategies.
- The school has a performance management policy for teachers that is linked to the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers and describes a meeting with the principal in Term 1 that elicits mutually agreed goals and a performance management plan with further opportunity for feedback on implementation. The goals are pursued with associated professional learning opportunities, where

appropriate, and followed up with classroom visits and a further review meeting in Term 4 with a requirement for the staff member to provide evidence to their performance manager of their achievement of these goals and of school targets. Teachers report this to be a useful process to develop their professional practice. Education assistants (EAs) and support staff undergo performance management with the deputy principal.

- Teachers differentiate curriculum and adjust learning groups based on individual student needs. The school schedules discrete, daily literacy and numeracy blocks, without interruptions from specialist subjects, in every classroom with the support of at least one EA to facilitate differentiated small group work. Individual education plans and group education plans are developed, recorded on the school network and assessed appropriately using the Special Education Needs reporting tool when required. School leaders and teachers identified students to benefit from the challenge of extension programs which have now been run in literacy, information and communications technology and visual arts. The school intends to continue and to broaden the range of offerings to gifted and talented students next year. The nearest Primary Extension and Challenge program is in Bunbury. This is not a viable option for many of the families of selected students due to the travel requirements to and from Bunbury.
- The school has conducted internal audits against the National Quality Standard (NQS) with a number of elements assessed as moving from “working towards” to “achieved”. School leaders have requested an external audit for 2018.
- Discussions with teachers confirm that assessment of student learning is embedded in their everyday teaching practice by continual monitoring including standardised tests, classroom assessment and professional judgements.
- Teachers participate in regular meetings with the local school network and other neighbouring schools to moderate student achievement and compare the teaching and learning programs.
- Student learning can be sustained and improved into the cycle of the next business plan with full commitment of the stable teaching staff and the implementation of whole-school, evidence-driven practices.

Areas of strength

- Grouping within classes to differentiate the curriculum and to meet all student needs.
- Use of professional networks to enhance the teaching and learning program and to moderate the standards of student learning outcomes.

Areas for improvement

- Ensure programs and strategies that aim to improve student performance are implemented consistently throughout the whole school.
- Consider ways to provide more collaborative planning time for staff.

Student Performance Monitoring

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

Findings

- The “Whole-School Assessment Scope and Sequence” program outlines the student assessment program for the year. Assessments include Year 3 and 5 NAPLAN which are linked to the business plan targets. Other assessments include BrightPath, On-entry Assessment, the Standardised Australian Spelling Test, PM Benchmarks Reading Assessment Resource, ORIGO quarterly tests, and Progressive Achievement Testing for mathematics and spelling.
- Discussions with the leadership team confirm results from these standardised tests are used to monitor student progress and to judge the effectiveness of teaching and learning programs. For example, data from these tests indicated more able students were underachieving leading to the creation of an extension class. The principal and teachers use the results and information from the standardised tests as part of the performance management process.
- The principal, with input from the administration team, board chair and staff, completes the self-review process on the extent the school is meeting its commitments to the DPA. Discussions with the leadership team confirm the self-review process enables the school to analyse school performance and adjust the teaching and learning program. For example, literacy and numeracy blocks were established in response to poor student learning outcomes in those areas. Another example is the employment and allocation of EAs to support teachers in areas of need.
- The Business Plan 2015–17 includes a priority area to “improve assessment and data collection” with a target to implement an “effective and informative whole-school assessment plan” by 2017. This plan has been developed but not yet fully implemented across the whole school. The principal and the teachers will have the opportunity to improve tracking of student learning outcomes as school-wide assessment becomes embedded across the school and an electronic system is developed to collate the data.

- The operational plan and the Improving Literacy and Numeracy Partnership plan (ILNP) both detail the monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of the school program and the extent to which student achievement targets are met and remediation is implemented. For example, as the On-entry data collection process was not completed satisfactorily, teachers attended a professional learning course to improve their skills.
- Discussions with teachers and the principal indicated teachers were inconsistent in collecting and entering data on student academic and non-academic outcomes. This inconsistency is an issue as whole of school analysis of student data cannot be completed. The leadership team plans to implement strategies to address the issue including attendance at professional learning courses and increased teacher collaboration.
- The PBS framework requires teachers to enter non-academic student data such as the incidence of positive and negative behaviours or the completion of individual student behaviour plans. Discussions with teachers and the principal confirm teachers are inconsistent in recording relevant data.
- Achievement of business plan targets is reported in the annual report. The 2016 Annual Report also included 2014–16 NAPLAN results in indicating school performance in comparison with all Western Australian public schools. Unfortunately, the tables in the annual report, which show school performance was very positive for 2016, are actually comparisons with like-schools.

Areas of strength

- The self-assessment process on measuring the extent the school is meeting the DPA requirements.
- The operational plan and ILNP provide a rigorous process to analyse student learning outcomes and effectiveness of teaching strategies.

Area for improvement

- Ensure consistency between teachers in the collection and analysis of student academic and non-academic data.

Program Delivery

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

Findings

- From the evidence provided, visits to classrooms and discussions with school leaders and teachers the reviewers are confident the Western Australian Curriculum is delivered and that education programs at the school are in accordance with the requirements of the *School Education Act 1999*, *School Education Regulations 2000* and the *School Curriculum and Standards Authority Act 1997*.
- Data currently gathered through the Australian Early Development Census, On-entry testing and NAPLAN identify a significant number of students at educational risk. Consequently, teachers develop a number of group education plans to complement the required individual educational plans and optimise the adjustments to learning programs. The implementation of these plans is supported by the allocation of at least one EA in every classroom from Kindergarten to Year 6 during literacy and numeracy blocks.
- The implementation of teaching and learning programs is supervised by the principal and deputy principal through informal discussions, classroom walk-throughs, discussions during school development days and the teacher performance management process. Teachers consult with curriculum leaders where required, who then provide support, mentoring and opportunities for in-class lesson demonstrations.
- The Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability indicated that the school has 39% of students with a disability against the total school population whereas the State average is 18%. Historically, this has translated into some significant behaviour management issues for the school and resulted in the implementation of the PBS framework since 2011. This framework is firmly embedded into school practice and continues to provide staff with an effective tool for managing student behaviour within a positive school environment. Regular training is conducted for existing, new and relief staff to ensure consistency. Students with significant behavioural issues are tracked closely in the playground to provide the best opportunity to diffuse potential issues.

- School leaders and staff representatives have undergone Team-Teach training through the School of Special Educational Needs: Behaviour and Engagement to manage students with extreme, complex and challenging behaviours and maintain a safe environment. Furthermore, adjustments are made to school organisation to ensure sufficient support is in place for staff and students at all times from Team-Teach trained school administrators. Despite these challenges students reported to the reviewers that they felt safe at school and that students were respectful of each other and of staff. Reviewers confirmed the student comments through discussions with parents and schoolyard and classroom observations.
- School policies are in place and clearly implemented to ensure the safety of students on excursions and camps with the good standing of students being a prerequisite to participation. Parents value these activities and believe the school manages the associated safety of the students effectively.
- There is no formal process for induction of new staff. New staff are provided with the staff handbook and the opportunity to ask questions relating to school policies and practices. School leaders should consider developing a more formal, rigorous induction process to ensure consistent understanding and implementation of whole of school programs.
- The school utilises the support of a wide range of external agencies. These include the Smith Family that provides support to approximately 50% of the student population and a representative on the school board. Foodbank supplies food for the breakfast club which provides breakfast for up to 25% of students and occasional lunches when required. The school operates a full-time canteen to help ensure students have a lunch every day. The Coal Miners Board sponsors students for camp costs to ensure all can participate in the two-yearly Year 5/6 camp.
- The on-site Child and Parent Centre supports identified needs of the school and provides integrated services for children 0–8 years and their families. Kindergarten teachers believe that children attending the centre are significantly advantaged by the experience when they commence school. The centre also provides the facility for teachers to refer students to the speech and occupational therapist who works within the school with identified students.
- The principal is an active member of the Shire of Collie Local Education Committee which includes representation from all the local schools to promote education and address youth issues in Collie.

- The school employs two local Aboriginal and Islander education officers (AIEOs) for a combined 0.9 full-time equivalent. They support students, parents and teachers with a wide range of issues including pastoral care, student learning in the classroom, social and cultural issues and attendance, providing a link between the school, the local Noongar community and local support services. One AIEO holds a limited authority to teach enabling her to conduct the languages other than English (LOTE) program and take classes across the school in the Noongar language.
- While the stability of the staff has the potential to support the sustainability of teaching and learning programs trialled and assessed as worthwhile, it is important for the school to increase collaborative opportunities for staff to ensure agreed programs are consistently embedded across the school and sustained into the future.

Area of strength

- Effective management of extreme, complex and challenging student behaviour through training and responsive organisation of school staff.

Area for improvement

- Develop a formal and structured induction process for new staff to ensure knowledge of and commitment to school policies and procedures.

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

- The school has a detailed long-term workforce plan and the Staffing Plan 2016–20 that lists the priorities for staffing to support school programs into the future within the context of a small staff cohort. The challenging school environment has been managed by careful selection of teachers, EAs and relief staff. To address business plan targets for student learning, a high proportion of EAs are used to support differentiated classroom programs in literacy and numeracy. Along with the number of part-time teachers in job share arrangements the school has needed to carefully consider placements to match student needs and staff skills. Every endeavour is made to manage fluctuations in student numbers particularly through monitoring the contracts of EAs.
- To minimise disruption when staff are absent from classrooms, the school has focused on identifying and upskilling a pool of suitable relief staff, particularly in the philosophy and practice of the PBS. They have also ensured that there is sufficient administrative support for relief teachers in dealing with behavioural issues.
- Staff responsible for specialist programs in LOTE, music and visual arts confirm the programs to be well-resourced and sustainable. The LOTE program in Noongar as a part of the implementation of the Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework, while highly valued by the majority of the school community, is very dependent upon the role of the qualified AIEO.
- The Year 4–6 academic extension program is currently run by the administration team with the future plan to either conduct the extension program themselves or release other teachers to run units as required.
- The school makes targeted use of its school characteristic funding to implement appropriate teaching and learning adjustments to support students for whom it is provided, including:
 - time for the AIEO to support Aboriginal students at educational, behavioural and attendance risk
 - employment of EAs to support the students in accessing the classroom programs and implementing specialised learning programs where required.

Wilson Park Primary School

- Unfortunately, the payment rate of voluntary contributions is only 7% at the moment despite the school providing numerous reminders in an effort to improve this rate.
- The school receives financial sponsorship from a number of groups to support various school programs and facilities. The school has extensive digital technology resources to support the curriculum. It has supplied every student from Year 3 to Year 6 with a laptop computer. Students in junior primary classes currently have access to a bank of XO laptops with a view to building a bank of tablets for Pre-primary to Year 2 students.
- Discussions with staff and observations around the campus confirm the school has sufficient resources to support the educational needs of the students and that these resources are managed to sustain the educational programs into the future.

Area of strength

- The creative and successful approach to accessing external funding support.

School Board

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

Findings

- The school board comprises five parents, two community members, two staff members and the principal. The school community decided to form the board from the existing school council to maintain continuity when the school attained IPS status in 2015. Board meetings are conducted once per term and generally last for about one hour.
- The board chair is the only member to have attended board training. One board member has attended a school development day with teachers as an observer.
- Discussions with board members and analysis of board minutes indicate there was some involvement of members in developing the business plan. The principal presented the business plan for board endorsement. The board participated in discussions about the strategic plan preceding the application for joining the IPS initiative.
- Reviewers confirm the board understands the boundaries between its role and the day-to-day management of the school.
- In July 2016 the school conducted student, parent and teacher satisfaction surveys. There is no evidence the results of the surveys were discussed at board meetings.
- Board minutes and discussions with the chair and board members provided evidence of collaboration with the school in tracking progress towards school goals and a high level of enthusiasm to take an active part in the development of the next business plan.
- There is a set agenda for board meetings that includes a financial report as a fixed agenda item. Reports on the business plan, student progress and program implementation are included as other agenda items. The principal presents student learning data, such as NAPLAN results, when the information becomes available. There was evidence the board has taken the opportunity to interrogate student learning data or to develop processes to review school performance.

- Discussions with parents and other non-board members confirm the school community is aware of the existence of the board but unaware of its roles and responsibilities. Board members are very keen to promote the activities of the board and to promote the profile and achievements of the school in the wider community.
- The board has not participated in its own self-review process.
- Discussions with board members confirm the board is prepared to increase its role in the school improvement process by participating in the development of the next business plan and to develop processes that will enable it to review school performance.

Areas for improvement

- Ensure all school board members participate in the development of the next business plan.
- Enable the board to collaborate with the school to analyse the results of student, parent and teacher surveys.
- Create opportunities for all board members to complete the training program.
- Conduct an annual self-review process.
- Provide regular written reports to the board on student achievement and student progress in achieving learning targets from the business plan. These reports should also be reflected in board minutes.

Conclusion

Students of Wilson Park Primary School achieved appropriate standards in literacy and numeracy compared to like-schools in 2015 and 2016. However, 2017 results were below expectations and the school is implementing remediation programs to arrest this decline.

The staff is focused on providing a safe, caring and positive learning environment for all students. Implementing programs to ensure all students can achieve their fullest potential is a priority for staff. There is a willingness by all staff to improve collaboration to ensure consistent implementation of programs and teaching strategies. There is a need to increase consistency in implementing programs and the collection and analysis of the relevant student data.

The school has well-developed and effective processes to manage extreme student behaviour. Support is readily available and provided. Resources are targeted to areas of high need.

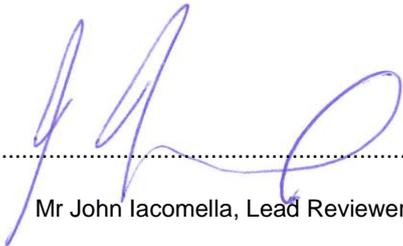
The wider community is very supportive of the school and very proud of the school's achievements. The community is always prepared to assist the school in any way it can.

The school board is looking forward to taking a more active role in determining school strategic directions and school priorities in preparing the next business plan.

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 Wilson Park 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.



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Mr John Iacomella, Lead Reviewer

8 February 2018

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Date



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Ms Margaret Brede, Reviewer

8 February 2018

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Date



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Mr Ken Perris, Director,
Independent Public School Review

13 February 2018

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Date