



Department of
Education

Shaping the future

Wellard 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. It will also inform the Principal Professional Review.

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

Opening in 2018 as an Independent Public School to relieve enrolment pressure at primary schools in the surrounding area, the school is located in the rapidly growing suburb of Wellard, approximately 40 kilometres south of the Perth central business district. It is within the South Metropolitan Education Region.

The school has an Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage of 1013 (decile 4). There are 705 students enrolled at the school from Kindergarten to Year 6.

Parent and community involvement is encouraged by the school through participation on the School Board in the Parents 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 Electronic School Assessment Tool (ESAT) submission and feedback provided during the validation visit delivered a wide-ranging account of the school context and operations in addressing its improvement agenda.
- As the first school to conduct the validation phase online (via WebEx), the standard of collaboration between the school and the Public School Accountability office was exceptional. This mode of conducting the validation phase of the Public School Review will be a very effective option when circumstances necessitate an offsite form of engagement.
- A culture of reflective school self-assessment, as the foundation for effective planning and continuous improvement, was evident at the strategic and operational levels.
- A variety of evidence was submitted and expanded on during the validation phase.
- Staff who engaged in validation discussions understood and accepted the value of reflection in pursuit of continuous school performance improvement.
- Staff described their engagement in the process as extensive, data orientated, collaborative and professionally stimulating.
- There is a clear alignment between performance evidence, and current and future planned actions, which adds to the efficacy of the school's continuous improvement ethos.
- Staff showed an authentic vibrancy for, and commitment to, the ownership of student success. Professional and personal responsibilities and expectations are both understood and accepted.

The following recommendation is made:

- Continue to consolidate/embed the school's self-reflective culture to strengthen and enhance the strategic intent and alignment of the school improvement journey.

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Relationships and partnerships

Wellard Primary School has established itself as a central point of support and connection within its emerging, diverse local community. The united and supportive staff ensure students are at the centre of their focus and planning. Engagement with families is actively prioritised to ensure all feel welcome and included.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The welcoming and respectful school culture has been thoughtfully nurtured by both the leaders and staff. Through their active presence and engagement with families, leaders and staff have embraced and celebrated their multicultural community with students.
- A deep respect exists among school leadership, staff and students for Aboriginal local histories, language and culture. This has engendered widespread staff buy-in to implementing complementary programs, creating a common language for giving a voice to the extensive and diverse range of cultures.
- There is a strong focus on the mental health and wellbeing of students and staff, with layers of formal and informal approaches to ensure the developmental and pastoral care needs of all are supported.
- Parents, through the School Board, have confidence in the school's governance procedures. Leaders and staff authentically seek the views of School Board members to inform decision making. This has been achieved through the high level of public accountability and transparency of the school's communication processes.
- Building partnerships with external agencies has been a key strategy in developing the school's identity, as exemplified through the partnership with Telethon's Speech and Hearing Hear Now Ear Clinics program.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Continue the school's committed journey to engaging with the Aboriginal community and its local history.
- Further strengthen the School Board through strategic recruitment of external community members.

Learning environment

Staff and students have a common set of values with respect to building positive relationships. This is reflected through staff actions in creating a safe and caring learning environment that includes monitoring processes focused on the health and wellbeing of students.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Students at educational risk are identified early using a comprehensive monitoring and tracking profile. They are provided with appropriate intervention/support in the form of highly skilled EAs¹, both mainstream and special needs. Teachers and EAs work together to ascertain strengths and areas for improvement.
- With substantial numbers of EAL/D² students, the school appointed a specialist to coordinate strategies targeting those students requiring specific intervention in literacy and numeracy. The primary source of identification is through the Class Achievement Profiles.
- There is significant evidence of a student-centred, progressive approach to identifying individual and cohort needs, particularly with respect to the immensely diverse student cultural backgrounds. Further, the focus on mental health and wellbeing has resulted in the implementation of Bounce Back that teaches social and emotional learning skills advocated by the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning.
- The impact of having a psychologist (0.46 full time equivalent) and chaplain services adds to the multi-layered student support structures and processes. This is strengthened through staff professional learning including Gatekeeper training, Trauma-informed practice and Protective Behaviours education.
- There is compelling evidence of the school's obligation to Aboriginal education. Its Reconciliation Action Plan, crafted under the headings Relationships, Respect and Opportunities, outlines the school's deep commitment to authentic integration of Aboriginal culture, language and histories in learning programs.

Leadership

The leadership team has taken a proactive approach to building a tangible culture of school success. In the pursuit of improved teaching and student learning outcomes, leaders work proactively in classrooms to support staff by sharing their knowledge and experience.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The school's distributed leadership model creates meaningful opportunities to build leadership capacities among staff. An authentic, collaborative staff ethos exists, ensuring ideas and options for continuous school improvement are acknowledged and given respectful, evidenced-based consideration.
- The Principal leads an executive team that nurtures commitment and ownership of school initiatives by offering opportunities for staff to participate as 'frontline' implementers of change. With a large proportion of staff in the early stage of their careers, there exists a unique opportunity for them to seek leadership opportunities. Producing Effective Leaders is a key focus area for the school.
- Students displaying interest in, or an aptitude for, leadership are given opportunities to self-nominate for a range of roles and responsibilities such as House, Arts and Culture Captains. With an eye on future community leadership, the school encourages students to pursue a community values leadership approach.
- Leading discussions on personal responsibility and professional accountability, the Principal has created the conditions for respectful leadership, staff and community relations. An authentic, collaborative staff ethos exists, ensuring ideas and options for continuous school improvement are acknowledged, evidence-based and given considered attention.

Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Continue to provide opportunities for team leaders and committee chairs to develop skills in delegation, running meetings and giving authentic feedback.

Use of resources

The school has sound processes to deploy resources in response to student needs. Monitoring systems and decision making protocols are robust and transparent. Areas of high priority and improvement targets outlined in the business plan receive proportionate levels of funding.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The Principal, in partnership with the manager corporate services, is alert to the need to be agile in responding to the rapidly growing student enrolment. Transparency and probity of decision making are key qualities underpinning budget management processes. Describing the need to be 'frugal', the Principal has been clear about 'the why' in applying stringent controls in relation to workforce planning.
- Teacher participation on the Finance Committee and as cost-centre managers is regarded as both an educative experience and an important feature of the school's governance processes. Targeted Initiative funding and disability allocations are carefully monitored to ensure students receive appropriate levels of support.
- The school's approach to the management of its budget has been measured, thoughtful and with the students' needs consistently at the centre. This means short, medium and long-term budget planning reflects the school's fiscal integrity while being strategically responsive to changing needs.
- This school invests in staff development, whole-school programs and manages their physical assets to create an effective learning environment for the benefit of students. The School Board is provided with regular updates on the deployment of financial and human resources.
- Visitors to the school are greeted by a 'front of house' administration team, keen to demonstrate high levels of professionalism. Building a positive image and reputation with the local community is this team's priority.

Teaching quality

Teaching practice is amplified by an embedded school-wide belief in evidence-based target setting. This drives school and classroom planning which is informed through a suite of TEFL³ teams. Building high levels of connected teaching practice across all classrooms is at the core of this school's pedagogy, as indicated in the school's Making a Difference (MAD) document – Pillar 1: Highly effective, skilled classroom practitioners. This focus is underpinned by the belief that *Every Student Matters, Every Moment Counts*.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- In a relatively short time, the school's unremitting approach to explicit teaching for the delivery of differentiated literacy and numeracy strategies has resulted in elevated levels of student achievement. Whole-school processes, programs and resources are used to improve connected practice and pedagogy delivered through comprehensive professional learning.
- There is an unambiguous emphasis on building common understandings based on a common pedagogical language. The document outlines The Wellard Way emphasising values, beliefs and expectations. Recruitment of staff starts with an unmistakable requirement that MAD be followed.
- Innovative teaching practices are embraced and supported through a culture of knowledge sharing, which is embedded in collaborative routines and structures. This has included discussions on the range of assessment tools used to collect evidence and to make decisions about what needs to be taught. Skilful development of dedicated pathways of learning for students at educational risk has also been prioritised.
- The focus on continuous improvement is manifestly evident in the school's intention to implement a new pedagogical framework. By leveraging high impact teaching practises gained from the Teach Well Master Class series (Pillar 2), there has been exceptional growth in teachers' ability to monitor and support students as they learn.
- Classroom observations with structured feedback based on the implementation of Daily Reviews and Full Participation Tactics forms a key element of teachers' performance management. This is directly linked to the School Improvement Plan's 'Enhancing Teaching Practice' priority.

Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Explore template options that would support the development of consistent records for teacher practice feedback.

Student achievement and progress

The approach to consolidating the school's student assessment database has been strategic by identifying the need for longitudinal, individual and cohort tracking processes. Despite limited stable cohort data and no 2020 NAPLAN⁴ systemic data, the school has achieved some impressive early trends with student achievement and progress.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Data collected is assessed purposefully for its validity and reliability and is used to inform classroom and whole-school planning. NAPLAN data has reinforced staff efficacy levels that they are delivering effective teaching practices based on how students learn best.
- Knowledge and understanding of the range of standardised assessments, in combination with teacher insight, is used skilfully to inform the preparation of Individual Education Plans and case management discussions.
- Being fully accountable for the educational progress of students, the school is committed to keeping parents informed of their child's progress. Response from parents was unequivocal in terms of value they placed on feedback about student achievement and progress.
- The trialling of a Class Achievement Profile (CAP), while in the early stages, has been well received by staff. This is a further indication of staff belief in the empowering value of data-informed class planning.

Reviewers

Rod Lowther
Director, Public School Review

Lynne Lucas
Director, Student Engagement and Wellbeing

Endorsement

Based on this report, I endorse the commendations and recommendations made by the review team regarding your school's performance.

Your next school review is scheduled in or after Term 1, 2025.



Melesha Sands
Deputy Director General, Schools

References

- 1 Education assistants
- 2 English as an Additional Language or Dialect
- 3 Teaching Effectively for Learning
- 4 National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy