



Department of
Education

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Public education
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Kingston Primary School

Public School Review

May 2021



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 its 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 school review report and determines when the next review will occur. The report is provided to the Principal, the Chair of the School Council/Board and the regional Director of Education.

Expectations of schools

The Statement of Expectation (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, as well as the Professional Performance Review of the Principal.

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.



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Context

Opened in 2009, Kingston Primary School is located in Australind, approximately 200 kilometres south of Perth, within the Southwest Education Region. In 2010, the school was part of the first cohort of schools to become an Independent Public School.

Currently, there are 666 students enrolled from Kindergarten to Year 6. A decline in student numbers, coupled by changes to the student demographics, has required adjustments to elements of learning program priorities. Kingston Primary School has an Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage of 972 (decile 7).

The school is a Professional Learning School, the only one of its type in Australia, working with universities across the country to provide an Internship program for 4th year students studying education.

There is strong community support for the school, with parents and the local community assisting in school activities. The School Board is involved in school planning and setting the strategic direction of the school.

Amenities and programs are supported by various fundraising activities organised throughout the year by the Parents and Citizens' Association's (P&C), who also operate the canteen and uniform shop.

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 preparation of the Electronic School Assessment Tool (ESAT) was led by the acting Principal, in partnership with the executive leadership team and members of staff.
- Significant collaboration was a highlight of the school self-assessment process, with many staff members expressing a sense of empowerment at having been asked to be part of the process.
- The wide selection of evidence provided an open and transparent account of the current school context and performance, and included case studies prepared by staff.
- A summary document framed by the Standard provided an effective overview of the school's performance against each domain.
- There is alignment between evidence of school performance, observations and judgements about performance.
- The positive support from the School Board throughout the process was acknowledged by the school leadership team.
- A number of staff and community representatives actively engaged and contributed their reflections during the school-based validation phase.

The following recommendation is made:

- Continue to promote the Standard as a reference point for ongoing judgements about school performance.

Relationships and partnerships

School Board members are knowledgeable, represent the community perspective and are strong advocates for the school. Their connections with local organisations facilitate the formation of valuable partnerships.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The school has taken explicit steps to elevate levels of Aboriginal cultural awareness and responsiveness. New book resources and incursions, together with environmental prints around the school, are designed to strengthen student familiarity with local Aboriginal histories and language.
- The community is extremely proud of their school, reflecting the shared values of family, inclusiveness and opportunities for all. This is further enhanced by the Japanese Sister School and Virtues projects.
- Internal partnerships between staff are strong and based on mutual trust and respect. Collaboration in different phases and levels of organisation are evident.
- The Education Care Network provides opportunities to create external partnerships that provide an extra layer of parent and student engagement.
- Staff and parents strongly endorsed the school's inclusive ethos, which acknowledges the empowering influence of people working together. The school chaplain is a valued element of this ethos.

Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Constantly look for ways to embed the Aboriginal culture and histories throughout the curriculum.

Learning environment

Successful schools create a learning environment designed to maximise student engagement. The school has given thoughtful consideration to setting values-based conditions that sustain interactive, creative learning and student wellbeing.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- With student behaviour as a focus, the school has developed a whole-school, agreed approach founded on the principle of 'Good and Advanced Standing'.
- Comprehensive students at educational risk policy and procedures, together with tracking and monitoring of students, ensure effective differentiation, interventions and adjustments are in place.
- The school's highly regarded ArtBeat program highlights the belief in the importance of giving students opportunities to access specialist learning areas such as; music, art, Japanese and dance.
- The Sister School arrangement with Takenodai Elementary School offers students an ideal opportunity to develop deep understandings and appreciation of Japanese language and culture.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Continue the development of opportunities for student leadership and voice.
- Achieve consensus on staff understanding of Advanced Standing to maintain high expectations of student behaviour.

Leadership

Since its opening, a culture of innovation and future-focused school improvement has been crafted by the school's leadership team. The recently appointed Principal understands school leadership and will seek to maintain the staff emphasis on the school's values and strategic direction for the benefit of all students.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- An ethos of distributed leadership underscores significant levels of shared responsibility, transparent decision making, accountability and unanimity of direction. The focus is on using a combination of context, relationships and mutual professional dependencies as the pillars for sustained growth.
- Work values incorporate two-way trust and respect between the leadership and staff. New initiatives are implemented systematically, with staff taking on leadership roles and providing peer feedback on practice.
- Staff members at all levels are recognised for their strengths and development needs. There is a collective desire to share expertise to benefit student learning.
- The leadership team has led staff to reflect on, then create, a whole-school instructional model that forms a shared understanding of what matters most in Kingston – *The Kingston Approach*.
- Leadership aspirants are encouraged to take on new responsibilities, knowing there is a genuine level of support available, and to seek advice and guidance as they grow into their role.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Continue to identify the instructional pre-conditions for learning as the key drivers for student success.
- Continue to promote the importance of positive personal attributes as critical to leadership success.

Use of resources

Students are beneficiaries of resource allocation based on transparent, informed decision making that aligns with the school's strategic intent.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Resources are managed by the Principal, manager corporate services and Finance Committee through formalised procedures, which optimise the oversight of resource allocation.
- A major benefit of the distributed leadership, is the multiple perspectives applied to resource management decisions, which are based on agreed fundamental principles that are focused on the best outcome for students.
- Thorough attention is given to ICT¹ planning, enabling the school to forecast future needs for its 21st century student digital learning options.
- The school has identified workforce planning as an essential priority, noting recent changes in student demographics and declining numbers.

Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Continue to be vigilant and agile with decision making in relation to budgeting for students at educational risk.

Teaching quality

High levels of teacher efficacy are reflected through a shared commitment to be accountable and responsible for every student to achieve their potential. This has created a strong, collaborative and reflective teaching culture.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Research is the starting point for decisions relating to the teaching programs and classroom management strategies being considered as part of the school's philosophy of continuous improvement.
- Staff engagement in, and the sharing of, project-based learning in mathematics has led to the development of the school's Numeracy Lesson Framework.
- Similarly, following reflective questioning, the drive to improve standards has led to the introduction of a phonemic awareness program (Heggerty). After comprehensive staff consultation and trialling led by the English committee, Talk for Writing has been introduced.
- There has been a persistent focus on maintaining the recognised value of partnerships between teachers and education assistants. This includes building mutual capabilities to successfully implement contemporary teaching support practices.
- To add to student intervention support in Years 2 to 6, Special Educational Need education assistants have received training in Letters and Sounds

Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Prepare a budget submission for the rollout of professional learning for staff in Brightpath.

Student achievement and progress

The school has developed a range of school-based data sets that allow them to track and adapt academic programs, and address the social and emotional needs of the changing student demographic.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- A frank assessment of recent trends in student achievement and progress, has forged a resolve by staff to identify multiple strategies to address the levels of connected practice across the phases of learning.
- The leadership team promotes the view that granular data analysis is the driver of student success. To that end, the school has developed a schedule for the collection of a range of data to monitor and assess student achievement and progress.
- The declining longitudinal On-entry Assessment Program data has signalled a determined approach by the school to introduce measures that involve targeted intervention. This includes, where necessary, withdrawal groups focused on intensive and explicit reading support.
- Key expectations of teachers in reporting and assessing student achievement and progress are clearly documented. This informs planning and provides accurate reporting to key stakeholders.

Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Continue to review and monitor the fidelity of implementation of agreed whole-school data analysis, to assess the impact of recently introduced lesson frameworks and learning programs on student success.

Reviewers

Rod Lowther
Director, Public School Review

Peter Jakimowicz
Principal, Dianella Heights Primary School
Peer Reviewer

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 for Term 2, 2024.



Melesha Sands
Deputy Director General, Schools

References

1 Information and communications technology