



Department of
Education

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South Newman Primary School

Public School Review

November 2020



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 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

together with the Funding Agreement for Schools.

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 1976 to accommodate the growing population of the town of Newman, South Newman Primary School is located in the heart of the Pilbara Education Region, approximately 1200 kilometres north-east of Perth. The school became an Independent Public School in 2012 and has an Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage of 942 (decile 8).

Offering enrolment to children from Kindergarten to Year 6, there are currently 408 students enrolled at the school. Providing education for students from more than 20 nationalities, many students speak English as their second language.

The values of respect, responsibility, care and compassion are a feature of 'The Newman Way' shared with other schools in Newman.

The school is enthusiastically supported by an active School Board.

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 commended:

- 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 add to the efficacy of the school's continuous improvement ethos.
- The planning intentions described in the school's Electronic School Assessment Tool submission were elaborated on during the validation phase by leadership, teaching staff, support staff and parent representatives.
- Staff showed an authentic vibrancy for, and commitment to, the ownership of student success, with professional and personal responsibilities and expectations understood and accepted.

The following recommendation is made:

- Give consideration to how the Standard could enhance the existing strong staff ethos of reflection.

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Relationships and partnerships

Discussions about school and student matters are encouraged, with regular two-way communication being a feature of transparent information exchanges. The school presents strong evidence of caring, connected relationships between staff, students and the community.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The School Board understands and respects its governance role and is supporting the vision and direction of the school.
- Staff expressed praise for the leadership team's commitment to pastoral care, and professional and personal morale. It fosters independence, curiosity and growth, and values diversity.
- The school's commitment to progressive reforms that are evidence-based and in line with community values and expectations is strongly endorsed by the School Board.
- Differentiated and tailored opportunities to create positive relationships exist both within the school and between the school and its community.
- Norms are embedded to set professional expectations for all staff interactions. These norms allow for all staff to feel safe and respected in the workplace.

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:

- Student performance analysis is rigorous and thorough to ensure supported action for students is appropriate to their specific needs.
- Staff have an intentional approach to developing and maintaining the health and wellbeing of students.
- There is a progressive student-centred focus on identifying individual and cohort needs, particularly with respect to the diverse student cultural backgrounds.
- Students with special needs and imputed disabilities are well supported with the school having a positive reputation for its inclusive learning environment for all children.
- The role of education assistants is regarded as pivotal to the success of the support provided to students at educational risk.
- The school has worked with parents, government agencies and the broader community to create a physical learning environment that is safe, motivating and engaging for students.
- The school-based attendance officer monitors student attendance daily and follows up with phone calls, building sustainable and productive relationships between the school and families.

Leadership

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 and given considered, evidenced-based attention.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The leadership team is cohesive, strategically unified and shares a balance of skill, knowledge and experience. They encourage and support staff to identify their professional learning needs to enhance their leadership skills.
- Across the school, the leadership team provides strong instructional and curriculum support and advice. Leaders' relationship with staff is fortified by trust and respect.
- The Principal's growth mindset is evidenced through an unremitting determination to empower staff to undertake leadership roles.
- The School Board has a respectful and informed appreciation of the importance of sustaining a productive relationship with school leadership.
- Significant levels of staff transiency does not define the school, rather it is used as an opportunity to offer leadership roles early in their careers.

Use of resources

This school invests in staff development, whole-school programs and manages their physical assets for the benefit of students to create an effective learning environment. The School Board is provided with regular updates on the deployment of financial and human resources.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The approach of the Principal and manager corporate services to budget management and workforce planning is student centred. Structural adjustments to the budget are made as required.
- Preparation of the school budget is thorough, considered and transparent. The Finance Committee understands and accepts the challenges of ensuring funding is deployed for the maximum benefit of students.
- Transparency of staff management decisions is supported through strategic workforce planning, which achieves a balance between student needs and staff preferences.
- Targeted initiatives and regional allocation funding are used to maximise the impact on student learning.
- The network support officer ensures the ICT¹ platform, including equipment and infrastructure, is in good working order, providing students with quality learning opportunities that involve digital learning options.

Teaching quality

The Principal is alert to, and respectful of, the existing high level of classroom experience and practice of teaching staff. Innovative teaching practices are embraced and supported through a culture of knowledge sharing, which is embedded in collaborative routines and structures.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Staff are dedicated to improving outcomes for each of their students. They are committed to a research-based improvement agenda, enhancing their craft in the pursuit of student success.
- A deep analysis of data to inform target setting showcases whole-school practices used to identify and select students for accelerated improvement.
- Whole-school processes, programs and resources are used to improve connected practice and pedagogy for all teachers. They have a shared belief about teaching and learning that is understood and accepted across the school.
- Teachers value opportunities for collaboration and professional learning, capitalising on them to share knowledge and experience with colleagues.
- The Western Australian Curriculum is at the forefront of all teaching and learning at the school and is used as a basis for the implementation of all whole-school teaching programs. This is particularly evident in the development of scope and sequences, which ensure curriculum continuity.

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.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Data analysis to identify areas of improvement is also used to prioritise the building of school-wide connected practice. Grade allocation processes are extensively moderated, consistent and defensible.
- Knowledge and understanding of standardised assessments, in combination with teacher insight, is used skilfully to inform the preparation of Individual Education Plans and case management discussions.
- The school is alert to areas requiring literacy and numeracy improvement and has implemented mandated approaches to ensure a sustained focus.
- Fine grained analysis of achievement and progress is a feature of the school's student performance tracking. This informs plans for targeted improvement.
- Noting language deficits in the early years, the school employed a speech pathologist to screen and provide therapy for students with articulation errors.
- Being fully accountable for the educational progress of students, the school is committed to keeping parents informed of their child's progress.

Reviewers

Rod Lowther
Director, Public School Review

Ryan Govan
Principal, Carnarvon Community College
Peer Reviewer

Endorsement

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

Your next school review is scheduled for Term 4, 2025.



Stephen Baxter
Deputy Director General, Schools

References

1 Information and communications technology