



Department of
Education

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Hocking Primary School

Public School Review

March 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 2008, Hocking Primary School is located approximately 26 kilometres north of the Perth central business district, within the North Metropolitan Education Region. It commenced with an enrolment of approximately 350 students and currently there are 622 students enrolled from Kindergarten to Year 6.

Hocking Primary School became an Independent Public School in 2011. It has an Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage of 1046 (decile 3).

The School Board has a governance role at the school and assists in the setting of targets and reviewing progress made against them. The active Parents and Citizens' Association is responsible for running the canteen, uniform shop and student banking. They also organise various fundraising activities for the school throughout the year.

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 submission and feedback provided during the validation visit delivered an in-depth account of the school context and operations in addressing its improvement agenda.
- A culture of reflective school self-assessment as the foundation for effective planning and continuous improvement was evident at the strategic and operational levels.
- Opportunities for staff contribution were provided to identify areas of celebration and evidence to support each domain of the Standard.
- A broad scope of performance evidence was selected for the review, with planned actions aligned to judgements made.
- Staff demonstrated ownership for student success, with professional and personal responsibilities and expectations understood.
- The school's self-assessment was enhanced significantly by conversations held with members of the school community during the validation visit.
- Representatives of the School Board engaged openly in the validation visit, providing insights to enhance school direction.

The following recommendations are made:

- Take advantage of the existing strong self-reflective culture to further enhance the strategic intent and alignment of the school improvement journey during the change of leadership.
- Use the Standard to benchmark the school's ongoing pursuit of aspirational school performance across each of the domains.

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Relationships and partnerships

The school actively seeks to establish and maintain engaging relationships and partnerships within and beyond the school, creating amplified levels of trust. Introduction of the 'Working Above the Line' philosophy has been a catalyst for promoting staff innovation and collaboration.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Parent satisfaction feedback is of a very high level. It is valued and sought routinely to shape an improvement culture.
- School Board representatives are well informed and advocate strongly for the school's direction.
- The 2021 Parent Information Booklet outlines engagement processes with parents and the community. These are well established and respected.
- The engagement and empowerment of school staff in decision making is valued as a feature of current school operations.
- Staff/student relationships are positive and respectful.
- Expectations of teacher communication practices with parents are outlined in the Hocking Primary School Communication Assessment document.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Explore options to meet the challenge of lifting the 'visibility' of School Board members.
- Continue to seek ways of embedding a strategic mindset to strengthen the impact of the School Board's support.

Learning environment

Delightfully balanced, man-made and natural play spaces are complemented by a genuinely caring approach to student and staff wellbeing.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- A safe, inclusive, supportive and functional learning environment is provided for students and staff. The respect between teachers and education assistants is compelling.
- Well-organised programs with digital learning enhancement of the curriculum and extracurricular activities, cater for a range of student learning needs and skills.
- Targeted strategies have produced exceptionally low levels of unauthorised absences.
- Staff have identified and provided quality case management processes and support strategies for students at educational risk (SAER).
- A proactive approach to behaviour management is underscored by a whole-school values approach.
- A close relationship with the local Intensive English Centre, together with input from the school psychologist, ensure students receive timely expert support.

Leadership

The school's strategic intent is informed by school performance data in combination with student, staff and community feedback. The leadership references the Department's Building on Strength future directions to exemplify the school's alignment with system priorities.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The Principal is acknowledged for his leadership guidance and support that has been characterised by empowering and enabling staff to have a strong sense of professional efficacy.
- The school's Current Leadership Distribution document represents work done as part of the Western Australian Future Leaders Framework, identifying 'high potential leaders' both within the school and its partner network school.
- Staff share various leadership opportunities, roles and responsibilities actively as part of a distributed leadership model.
- Staff understanding of, and commitment to, unified school improvement processes are aligned strategically to their own focus on personal growth and development.
- A school-wide culture of reflection has created a collective enterprising spirit through elevated levels of self-awareness.

Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Research Aboriginal cultural histories of the Hocking area as a precursor to explicit professional learning focused on the Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework.

Use of resources

Planning, management and monitoring processes for the use of resources are aligned to school operations. There is a clear intent to ensure resources are deployed to optimise the conditions for student success.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The manager corporate services is acknowledged for the high quality financial and budget management processes and procedures, that ensure staff have an active part in resource deployment decision making.
- Resource allocation priorities have been modified to ensure alignment to the school business plan. Decisions are strategic, transparent and evidence based.
- For students who attract characteristics funding, prudent decision making in the allocation of resources ensures students' identified needs are fully met.
- Workforce planning needs identified in the current staff profile are prioritised to optimise succession planning.
- A detailed workforce profile, inclusive of current and future needs, ensures workforce planning is based on sound evidence of what is in the best interests of students and the needs of staff.
- The front office reception team is widely acknowledged for its respectful and friendly engagement with parents, visitors, students and staff.

Teaching quality

There is a school-wide commitment to a performance culture around explicit teaching and whole-school approaches. The strong foundation for this commitment is a result of a high level of teacher professional capability and personal responsibility.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Shared beliefs about teaching and learning are evident across the school by all staff.
- Understanding and support for whole-school consistency in the delivery of learning programs is captured by expectations described in the school's Teaching and Learning Framework.
- Conditions have been created for staff to undertake peer observations, seek collaborative mentoring and access professional learning opportunities to enhance their teaching craft.
- Research is central to the development of pedagogies that underpin connected practice between classroom, operational and strategic planning.
- The HASS¹ Plan 2021 is reflective of the school's focus on the Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework and its incorporation into all areas of learning.
- A range of data are collected and analysed routinely to support judgements regarding student achievement and progress.

Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Continue the focus on developing structured assessment and pedagogy for mathematics across the school, with the support of the Wanneroo Educational Network mathematics professional learning.

Student achievement and progress

Processes are embedded to analyse a range of data to inform plans for student success. There is a school-wide understanding of the value of evidence-based decision making in classrooms.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Common understanding and commitment by staff to data literacy, its purpose and impact on class planning, has strengthened differentiated teacher practices.
- There is a focus on the whole child with both academic and social domains linked across the school.
- Tracking of student learning profiles demonstrates a strong understanding of individual student needs.
- Students at risk have Documented Education Plans using Special Educational Need planning, where SMART goals are set using ABLE WA². These plans are reviewed every five weeks for tracking by the SAER co-ordinator.
- Sustainable and consistent judgements are made through comprehensive moderation processes involving common assessment tasks, Brightpath and Progressive Achievement Test assessments.
- The school's structured literacy approach delivered elevated levels of student achievement in Year 3 literacy, notably, writing and grammar and punctuation.

Reviewers

Rod Lowther
Director, Public School Review

Warren Bachman
Principal, Armadale 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 1, 2024.



Stephen Baxter
Deputy Director General, Schools

References

- 1 Humanities and Social Sciences
- 2 Abilities Based Learning Education, Western Australia