



Department of
Education

Shaping the future

Southern Grove 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 of Education (the Department) in student achievement and progress.

The Statement is between; the Department, 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

Southern Grove Primary School is located in Southern River, approximately 28 kilometres south-east of the Perth central business district in the South Metropolitan Education Region.

Opening as an Independent Public School in 2018, the school has an Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage of 1046 (decile 3).

Currently, 493 students are enrolled from Kindergarten to Year 6, a significant increase since the original enrolment of 96 kindergarten and pre-primary students. The opening of another primary school in the area is yet to have a significant impact on the school's enrolment.

The Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) supports the school through the provision of additional resources to benefit all students. An active School Board is involved in strategic planning, and development and monitoring of the school's business plan.

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:

- For each domain, the school's evidence and self-reflections were clearly presented within overview documents. Consideration was given to ensure the evidence selected for analysis was relevant and linked directly to the school's judgements about its performance.
- The Principal and leadership team undertook a highly consultative approach in preparing the school's self-assessment, ensuring all staff, and School Board members had input into the process and the opportunity to share their journey with the reviewers.
- Staff, students, parents and community members demonstrated support for, and genuine understanding, appreciation and ownership, of their school's distinctive whole child, student-centred culture.
- The school review process was regarded by staff and the community as 'everyone's business', creating the conditions for honest and frank conversations around school performance and accountability.
- The school's submission was well organised and logically sequenced, which assisted the validation phase of the process.

The following recommendation is made:

- Continue to use the Standard to facilitate ongoing discussions about school performance as part of the school's ongoing self-assessment practices and review cycle.

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Relationships and partnerships

In establishing its unique identity, rigorous attention and consideration has been given to building relationships that reflect and progress the distinct context and philosophies of the school. The school strives to embrace the cultural diversity within its community.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Community stakeholders and staff are highly invested and engaged in creating a successful school. The community values the school's 'whole-child' philosophy and appreciates the difference this is making for their children.
- Every child is recognised as an individual. This is evident through all students wearing name badges, a simple strategy that has been successful in allowing all staff to use individual's names during interactions, creating a sense of trust and connection across the school.
- Staff relationships are respectful and professional. Collectively the staff demonstrate a deep knowledge and common understanding of their students and the school's strategic direction. Staff hold themselves accountable, ensuring a culture of quality collaboration, feedback, empowerment and commitment.
- The introduction of Compass as a communication vehicle has enhanced the school's ability to communicate effectively with the community.
- The school connects to its community through a proactive and diverse approach to engaging with stakeholders through events such as Twilight Evenings, Grovies Café, Chit-Chat Coffee sessions and Country of the Month.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Work with families from culturally diverse backgrounds to establish ways of engaging them further in the school community.
- Seek further opportunities to welcome members of the local Aboriginal community to share their culture with students and staff.

Learning environment

Underpinned by their focus on the whole child, at every opportunity, the Principal and staff have been deliberate in creating an environment that is welcoming, child centred, inclusive and highly engaging, making it a place where students and families want to be.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The Walker Learning Approach (Walker Learning) is implemented with fidelity, promoting student agency and engagement. This informs a deliberate approach to the design of the physical environment. Indoor and outdoor spaces maximise positive impact on the engagement, empowerment and wellbeing of students.
- Underpinned by a suite of policy, planning frameworks and resources, behaviour expectations are high and explicitly taught. Positive Behaviour Support strategies are embedded across the school.
- An identified focus on social and emotional learning, self-management and relationships are supported through the implementation of programs such as Play is the Way, and Zones of Regulation.
- Students at educational risk (SAER) procedures are comprehensive and shared, with case management processes a feature. The school's SAER Targeted Response Plans highlight the impact of data in combination with provision of supports aligned with documented planning and reporting processes.

Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- The learning support coordinator to continue to work alongside teachers in order to build the knowledge and skills they require to create documented plans with Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Reliable and Timed goals.

Leadership

The leadership team has a strong shared moral purpose with a united vision for the school founded on high expectations of both students and staff. The leadership teams' quest for excellence is fostered through collaboration, consultation and support.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The Department's purpose, Every Student, Every Classroom, Every Day is embodied by the school's leaders and clearly underpins the school's vision and business plan.
- Leadership is strategically structured and distributed, with many well supported opportunities for staff to take on leadership roles. This has contributed to a strong organisation, where staff are empowered and have ownership and influence over the operations of the school.
- The multi-layers of leadership comprised of impact coaches, curriculum leaders and professional learning community (PLC) leaders ensures whole-school practices are understood and embedded with fidelity.
- Staff are engaged in the development and review of the business plan and operational plans. There is clear alignment between the business plan, operational plans, resourcing and classroom practice.

Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- The implementation of the Western Australian Futures Leaders Framework to enhance the processes already in place to identify, develop and support aspirant leaders from within the school.

Use of resources

The Principal and manager corporate services (MCS) work in collaboration to lead strategic management of the school's physical, financial and human resources. There are clear links between school budgeting, operational planning and the business plan.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Processes and practices are established for effectively and efficiently managing financial and human resources. The Finance Committee assists with financial oversight and the School Board is kept well-informed of the school's financial management processes.
- Resource allocation is evidence-based, supports school planning and is responsive to the complex needs of the school community.
- The MCS has undertaken a significant amount of work to ensure the Reserve Replacement Plan is robust and will meet the needs of the school into the future.
- A significant financial commitment has been allocated to professional learning. This has led to staff having a common language about, and capacity to, fully implement whole-school approaches.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Continue to monitor the impact of the recent establishment of a new neighbouring school on funding to ensure the sustainability of key programs and projects.
- Continue to monitor student characteristics funding to ensure it is expended to meet student needs and contributes to school improvement.

Teaching quality

High levels of teacher trust underpinned by a shared belief that every child can achieve success defines teaching and learning at the school. Research and evidence are the foundations upon which quality teaching is developed and supported.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The school has developed an instructional guide which contains expectations and guidelines for Walker Learning, supporting student engagement, student services, curriculum, planning, assessment and reporting. This comprehensive document is a valuable resource that support staff to ensure the school's programs are delivered in a consistent manner.
- The school has adopted iSTAR¹ as the foundation of its instructional model. This is embedded in lesson planning and throughout curriculum programs resulting in decreased variability of teaching practice across the school.
- The school has balanced the use of explicit teaching with Walker Learning in a strategic and intentional manner to meet clearly understood and distinct outcomes. Staff know how to teach based on the outcomes they want students to achieve.
- There is a strong culture of staff collaboration evident. Staff meet regularly to develop three week 'statements of intent'. These highly responsive plans are informed by the analysis of data with a focus on the needs of the particular cohort of students.
- Literacy, numeracy and Walker Learning impact coaches are valued and provide invaluable support in maintaining high quality teaching across the school.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Continue to build teacher capacity in using English as an Additional Language or Dialect Progress Maps to support planning, monitoring of student progress and reporting.
- Continue to review and refine the school's approach to catering for academically able students.

Student achievement and progress

There is a school-wide understanding of the value of evidence-based decision making in classrooms.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Data walls are used to track student achievement and progress. This information is analysed by teachers, the executive team and allied professionals to inform planning and identify students for case management.
- Brightpath is used to support teachers in moderating their judgements and allocating grades in writing.
- Following formal assessments, teachers provide feedback to students about their achievement and progress. Students are supported in developing, pursuing, and achieving their own personal goals based on this feedback. The school has embedded a school-wide process to support students with this.
- The school has a comprehensive K-6 assessment schedule in place. The tools used are reputable and evidence-based, providing meaningful information to support classroom and whole-school planning.
- The use of Walker Learning individual student records to collect formative observations, provides teachers with a greater insight of a child's deeper understanding of concepts.

Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- To identify and implement strategies to raise achievement levels of students in English and mathematics and further develop the case management of students who are on the borderline between achieving a C or a B grade.

Reviewers

Gary Crocetta
Director, Public School Review

Ashley Mottershead
Principal, Woodland Grove 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 in for Term 4, 2025.



Melesha Sands
Deputy Director General, Schools

References

- 1 Inform/Inspire, Show/Share, Try/Transfer, Apply/Act, Review/Revise