



Department of
Education

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Middle Swan Primary School

Public School Review

February 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

Established in 1949, Middle Swan Primary School is located in the suburb of Stratton, 24 kilometres north-east of Perth, within the North Metropolitan Education Region. Facilities include a nature playground, specialist computer laboratory and a refurbished science learning area.

The school transitioned to become an Independent Public School in 2011 and currently has 470 students enrolled from Kindergarten to Year 6. It has an Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage of 937 (decile 8).

A Child and Parent Centre is located on the school grounds, and helps to build strong partnerships with parents and carers. The centre provides services and support programs for students, parents and the wider community.

The Parents and Citizens' Association is highly supportive of the school and actively supports projects through fundraising activities and seeking grants.

The School Board has an embedded governance role and profile within the school and meets regularly. Members come from a wide range of backgrounds including from external support agencies.

School self-assessment validation

The Principal submitted a comprehensive school self-assessment.

The following aspects of the school's self-assessment process are confirmed:

- Open, honest and transparent self-assessment processes are evident at the school.
- The school engages in self-assessment practices aligned to the Fogarty EDvance School Improvement Program and domains of the National School Improvement Tool.
- The school community and staff further enhanced the self-assessment through discussions held during the validation visit.

The following recommendations are made:

- Pay explicit attention to the quality of evidence used to describe the essential indicators of performance, as outlined in the Standard.
- Engage a wide range of staff in school review processes through the collaborative identification of evidence and aligned statements regarding analysis, impact and planning.

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Relationships and partnerships

Transparent and open communication enables a range of beneficial partnerships and relationships across the school, and between The Smith Family and the Child and Parent Centre. A focus on student needs, early intervention, childhood development, school transition and parent support programs strengthens the view of the school as a child-centred hub in the community.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The school values and engages in a range of partnerships with external agencies that have a clear purpose, a shared understanding of needs, sustainability and meet a genuine need in the school community.
- Student and staff relationships are supportive. Students commented that staff provide opportunities and support beyond the classroom to make school a positive experience.
- Opportunities for collaboration between staff are welcomed and valued.
- Focused on transition and community relationships, the progressive and supportive School Board use their collective skills and attributes to support the school's direction.

Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Implement a parent partnership plan in order to engage and increase parent participation and a sense of belonging for all families.

Learning environment

Addressing the pre-conditions for learning, including behaviour and attendance, is acknowledged as an ongoing priority for the school. Regular review of practice occurs to meet the individualised and distinctive needs of students.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Attendance processes are sound and place an unwavering focus on increasing the regular attendance of all students through the provision of support.
- Current students at educational risk (SAER) processes ensure that student needs are identified and catered for within a model of collaborative support.
- The school engaged effectively with SWS¹ to provision and embed a pilot program explicitly supporting Tier 3 interventions to behaviour.
- 'Our Standards' of behaviour outline expected behaviours and provide guidelines for students, staff and school community. It sets the tone for a positive culture and demonstrates an ongoing commitment to a shared understanding of practice.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- With a focus on data, review the effectiveness of the Friendly Schools Plus program through the wellbeing team.
- Formalise and embed the SAER plan to ensure it summarises and outlines SAER and case management processes.

Leadership

The need to enhance and sustain student achievement and progress through whole-school approaches, to underpin the school's improvement journey, is well-understood. A strong foundation for this commitment has been provided through the establishment of the school's key priorities.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The Principal is viewed as supportive, with clear and high expectations. She is recognised as an enabler of positive change, developed through trust and transparent decision making.
- Performance management processes are supported by accountability meetings to encourage teachers to reflect on their impact and to align student progress.
- The Progress Committee is viewed as critical to driving accountability across the school. There is a strong focus on embedding collaborative practices, peer observations, goal setting and moderation.
- Underpinned by frameworks adapted from Fogarty EDvance, strategic plans are in place that identify whole-school strategies and explicit targets for ongoing improvement.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Formalise the intent and structure of performance management coaching to ensure clarity of roles, with a focus on embedding the EDI² whole-school pedagogy.
- Seek opportunities to increase the number of accountability meetings to drive and further support data-driven decision making.

Use of resources

School resourcing is carefully managed to ensure human, physical and financial resources are used to create the conditions for students to achieve and thrive.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Allocation of budgets and alignment of resourcing is evident, with careful consideration given to historical planning, school context and the respective needs of students.
- Human resource management is reviewed regularly to address budget imbalances. There is a significant investment of staff allocated to implement support and intervention.
- Allocation of education assistants and provision of varied intervention approaches are responsive to and determined at the point of need.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Align resourcing to operational plans that address school priorities, to ensure there are clear and overt links regarding the allocation of resourcing.
- Continue to monitor salaries expenditure carefully to drive planning for the allocation of reserve accounts.
- In line with school priorities, plan for and manage information and communications technology infrastructure, technologies and the associated curriculum implementation.

Teaching quality

Staff are hardworking and committed, and acknowledge the need to transform whole-school pedagogy and practice to ensure a focus on what is important, students achieving their potential. Consistent practice and addressing behaviour and wellbeing needs underpin shared beliefs.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- In response to data, a language express program was implemented in Kindergarten/Pre-primary to address identified deficits in oral language skills.
- Approaches to the explicit teaching of literacy are supported through the implementation of Talk for Writing and Talk for Reading.
- Whole-school approaches to the teaching of numeracy ensure instruction is explicit, relevant, purposeful and engaging. Teaching is supported by technologies and text books.
- A daily warm up and elements of EDI practices form the whole-school pedagogy, which aims to ensure consistent implementation of literacy and numeracy programs.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Review current strategies and formalise the whole-school approach to peer observations.
- Increase opportunities for teachers to engage in disciplined dialogue approaches in order to analyse school-based data.
- Through targeted peer coaching and feedback processes, embed a consistent approach to the delivery of whole-school pedagogy and practice, across all phases of schooling.

Student achievement and progress

The school understands its level of achievement and is aware of the need to create and sustain the right conditions for learning. There is a growing commitment by all staff to undertake analysis of student performance information at a class and whole-school level.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The Cygnets pre-Kindergarten program supports an early intervention process, builds key relationships and enables students to transition smoothly to formal schooling.
- Evidenced in the early years, is strength in target setting, monitoring and moderation processes using system and school-based data.
- The school is recognised and acknowledged as improving outcomes for Aboriginal students when considering their relative NAPLAN³ achievement and progress, and rates of attendance.
- 2017-2019 NAPLAN results indicate high levels of progress and achievement in reading and writing.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Continue to recognise and support the use of school-based data to inform teaching practice and refine improvement strategies, across all phases of schooling.
- Utilise numeracy and literacy committees to review the effectiveness of whole-school approaches, through analysis of system and school-based data.

Reviewers

Rebecca Bope
Director, Public School Review

Gary Crocetta
Principal, Mount Pleasant 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 Statewide Services
- 2 Explicit Direct Instruction
- 3 National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy