



Department of
Education

GOVERNMENT OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

D19/0449288

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Cowaramup Primary School

Public School Review

September 2019

PUBLIC SCHOOL REVIEW

Purpose

All Western Australian public schools are reviewed every three years 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 that a school is operating effectively and 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.

The principal provides the review team with a self-assessment of the school's performance based on evidence gathered by the principal and staff. Information validated by the review team is considered before and during the school visit. This forms the basis for the school review report. The report is provided to the principal, the chair of the school board/council 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 and the Funding Agreement for Schools.

School performance rating

This performance rating is based on information gained from the self-assessment submission and the validation process. It is focused on a review of the following areas of school performance: relationships and partnerships; learning environment; leadership; use of resources; teaching quality; and student achievement and progress.

The school's performance rating is:

	Effective
	The school demonstrates effective practice in creating the conditions required for student success.

	Needs Improvement
	The school has aspects of its practice below expectations and needs supported action to improve student success.

Context

Cowaramup Primary School is situated in the Southwest Education Region of Western Australia, in the Shire of Augusta-Margaret River, approximately 258 kilometres from Perth.

Established in 1923, and achieving Independent Public School Status in 2015, the school provides educational programs for students from the town and surrounding farms. As this is a rural area, some students travel to school by one of three school buses.

Cowaramup Primary School has an Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage rating of 1037 (decile 3). Currently, it enrolls 345 students from Kindergarten to Year 6.

Support and additional resources are provided to the school through the efforts of the School Board and the Parents and Citizens' Association.

School self-assessment validation

The principal submitted a comprehensive and rigorous school self-assessment.

The following aspects are confirmed:

- Preparing for the school review process coincided with several changes in staff and with senior leaders' participation in the Leading School Improvement professional learning series. This provided an additional impetus to critique the school's performance across each of the School Improvement and Accountability Framework (SIAF) planning domains.
- During two school development days and several follow-up sessions, staff reflected against the six SIAF domains when developing a school improvement narrative referred to as 'What Matters Most'.
- This reflection process established an improvement agenda that includes:
 - stronger alignment of professional learning teams to the business plan and a focus on 'What Matters Most';
 - review of leadership opportunities and structures with stronger connection to the school's strategic intent;
 - building of productive and connected teams and the implementation of agreed group norms;
 - development of an agreed change management process; and
 - enhanced student voice.
- Staff subsequently report stronger connection to the school improvement foci of curriculum, community and culture.

The following recommendation is made:

- Continue to enhance the role of Professional Learning Teams (PLTs), emphasising stronger alignment with the business plan, development of leadership skills and connection to 'What Matters Most'.

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Relationships and partnerships	
Families acknowledge the welcoming and safe learning environment offered at Cowaramup Primary School, highlighting the strong relationship between the school and the community.	
Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All National School Opinion Surveys demonstrate high rates of satisfaction. • A culture of open engagement facilitates a natural process of community involvement in school-based initiatives. • The Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) program and an emerging focus on sustainability are contributing to the development of a positive school culture. • A broad range of purposeful and effective partnerships exist. • The School Board has evaluated its effectiveness, is focused on ongoing training, and is proactive in its support of the school and its endeavours. • Communication processes are established and are valued by parents. • A focus on enhanced teamwork, and establishing a common purpose and group norms is evident.
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Align community engagement activities to the strategic directions of the school by building agreed actions into the community plan. • Continue to use Seesaw to share student work and provide feedback. • Develop an induction/training package for new School Board members.

Learning environment	
Through the PBS approach, the school has an emphasis on teaching, modelling and reinforcing positive behaviours, centred around the three expectations of 'be respectful, be resilient and be your best'. Student councillors and faction captains provide regular feedback.	
Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The PBS approach is shared with the community through the school plan, website, newsletter and an innovative online application. • A behaviour matrix and schedule documents requirements regarding the teaching of agreed behavioural expectations. Students and staff develop instructional movies that are shared with the community at assemblies. • Functional behaviour analysis is complemented by a PBS team that supports teachers to plan and implement behavioural approaches. • Differentiation of learning is a significant focus during staff performance management self-reflection and collaborative planning time. • Student surveys inform teacher performance management self-reflection.
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to monitor the fidelity of PBS implementation and consider succession planning in relation to leadership of this key initiative. • Support in-class differentiation by enhancing students at educational risk performance tracking.

Leadership

Leaders at all levels are focused on establishing shared, school-wide directions. Collaborative identification of 'What Matters Most' supports prioritisation of curriculum, culture and community.

Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PLTs provide an avenue for meaningful engagement of staff in school improvement activities. In building PLTs, agreed norms and meeting structures were collaboratively determined. • An agreed change management model is built into PLT operations, provides a common focus for discussions, and allows for staff input. • Reading Champions, who also lead PLTs, guide data analysis, strategy implementation and moderation, and facilitate professional learning. • Strong leadership is evident in PBS analysis and planning approaches.
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance commitment to collaborative strategies by documenting the what, how and why of each element of the 'What Matters Most' agenda. Include agreed assessment, instructional, curriculum and reporting expectations. • Deepen the role and function of PLTs by further connecting these groups to 'What Matters Most'. • Further align school improvement targets at the business plan, operational plan, and classroom levels. Link targets to analysis of school-based assessments. • Incorporate school reflections against the <i>Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework</i> by building responses into curriculum, culture and community school plans.

Use of resources

The school leadership team is proactive in attracting resources for a growing school. There is a strong culture of contribution to, and engagement with, resource planning through PLTs.

Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school budget is collaboratively determined, considering the intent of school improvement plans. The Finance Committee and Board are well informed about, and endorse, the budget. Finance Committee membership and understanding of processes is enhanced by representation from PLTs. • Human resource management considers the need to reinforce emerging leadership structures with additional staffing allocations and support. • Student characteristic funding is utilised to employ education assistants, and supports students at educational risk planning processes. • Voluntary contribution collection rates are high due to the introduction of more flexible payment options.
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create clearer links between school budgets, the business plan and/or operational plan strategies. Enhance links between operational plan coordination and cost centre management. • Consider longitudinal growth in student numbers when workforce planning.

Teaching quality

<p>PLTs and school leaders support staff to focus on common instructional approaches in the areas of: reading; spelling; statistics and probability; and PBS.</p>	
Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through Reading Champions, the six pillars of reading are shared across the school. Common language is embedded and targeted teaching occurs. • The early childhood team developed a Walker Learning Approach operational plan that seeks to explore play-based approaches. • A focus on improving access to ICT¹ sees students increasingly utilise technology, with the challenge being to further embed its purposeful use. • Student assessment and reporting references the SCSA² exemplars, analyses grade allocation, and includes external moderation. • Performance management processes include AITSL³ Australian Professional Standards for Teachers self-reflection, student surveys, and peer-to-peer observations.
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalise and document an agreed upon whole-school instructional model. • Ensure that assessment has a clear purpose and is useful at student, classroom, cohort and whole-school levels. • Further develop common assessment tasks. • Provide staff with greater choice regarding performance feedback, including opportunities for constructive, critical feedback from peers.

Student achievement and progress

<p>The school understands its current level of performance, reflecting against systemic and school-based data trends. There is an intent to further refine data use.</p>	
Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NAPLAN⁴ results are examined as a whole staff, with results cross-referenced with ACER⁵ Progressive Achievement Tests (PAT). Through PLTs, NAPLAN results are backward mapped, supporting the identification of teaching emphases. • Letters and Sounds and Words Their Way support literacy instruction. • NQS⁶ assessment has occurred, with further reflection and response planned. • Australian Early Development Census data is referenced with an expanded focus on social competence and emotional maturity planned.
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen data literacy and expectations regarding the use of data by embedding a disciplined dialogue approach to analysis. • Monitor NAPLAN band tracking and link analysis to targeted planning. • Determine a level of 'expected progress' by referencing longitudinal Cowaramup Primary School PAT performance trends. • Embed access to OEAP⁷ predictive data to support the tracking of achievement from Pre-primary to Year 3 and to cross-reference with PAT. • Continue to progressively embed the Words Their Way spelling program.

Reviewers

Stuart Percival
Director, Public School Review

Janine Kinninment
Principal, Burrendah Primary School
Peer Reviewer

Endorsement

Based on this report, I endorse your school performance rating of 'Effective'.

Your next school review is scheduled for 2022.



Stephen Baxter
Deputy Director General, Schools

References

- 1 Information and communication technology
- 2 School Curriculum and Standards Authority
- 3 Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership
- 4 National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy
- 5 Australian Council for Educational Research
- 6 National Quality Standard
- 7 On-entry Assessment Program