



Department of
Education

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Public education
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Boulder Primary School

Public School Review

April 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 focussed 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

Boulder Primary School is located in Kalgoorlie-Boulder, 597 kilometres east of Perth, in the Goldfields Education Region. The school is steeped in history with the original building (now the administration building) constructed in 1887 to meet the needs of the 'Golden Mile'. Boulder Primary School is set in well-established, attractive grounds and students are taught in modern classrooms, many of which have been added to the original building.

The school, with an Index of Community and Socio-Educational Advantage rating of 818 (decile 10), currently enrolls 316 students from Kindergarten to Year 6. In 2016, Boulder Primary School became part of the KindiLink¹ initiative. The school is building partnerships with local agencies and the community to support students' needs.

The school gained Independent Public School (IPS) status in 2019 and has the support of an active Parents and Citizens' Association, an Aboriginal Parents' Group and School Board.

School self-assessment validation

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

The following aspects are confirmed:

- Staff were provided with opportunities for genuine collaboration and reflection in the school assessment process.
- Multiple sources of credible evidence were selected for analysis.
- The school's self-assessment was enhanced by the conversations with members of the school community during the validation visit.
- Parents, teachers, support staff and students were involved in the scheduled meetings.
- Planning intentions described in the school's submission were elaborated on during the validation phase.
- A shared understanding of current levels of achievement and progress is apparent.
- There was a strong alignment between evidence submitted, judgements made and future planned actions discussed during the validation visit.

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Relationships and partnerships	
<p>There is a clear commitment on the part of the leadership team and staff to strengthen relationships within and beyond the school community. The school values its proud history. An alumni Facebook page has been created to perpetuate and extend school relationships.</p>	
Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is significant evidence of high quality, trusting relationships leading to a positive school culture. • Representing the views of the parent community, the perception of the Board is that the school is warm and welcoming and feels like a family. • The school is developing a positive reputation based on the high levels of community involvement and innovative programs. Significantly higher numbers of parents now attend assemblies and school events. • School priority areas, such as improving attendance, have a high level of parent awareness through multi-pronged communication methods that include newsletters, informal conversations at school, home visits, Facebook and Instagram. • The school has developed a range of partnerships in the wider community including mining companies, the Goldfields Arts Centre, YMCA² and the West Australian Ballet company. • The Kindilink program has been credited with drawing parents into the school, developing their understanding of school expectations and creating a sense of belonging and shared ownership of the school.
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In response to survey feedback, ensure that parents understand all of the programs that run at the school, especially those outside literacy and numeracy.

Learning environment	
<p>The focus areas of the new IPS Business Plan are literacy, numeracy, wellbeing and the performing arts. The school provides a rich suite of opportunities in the performing arts for students to follow their interests and to be inspired by immersion in unique learning experiences such as ballet, drumming, weaving, piano and Aboriginal boys' dance.</p>	
Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A consistent process for monitoring and improving student attendance has been implemented. • An extensive range of student engagement opportunities are offered within a safe, orderly, inclusive learning environment. • A whole school BMP³, including 123 Magic, has been effective in raising student expectations of their own behaviour and has provided strategies for students to develop self-management skills. • SAER⁴ are identified and their needs are addressed through a wrap-around student services team comprising the Principal, school psychologist, occupational and speech therapists, school health nurse and chaplain who meet weekly to plan individualised support.
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review current attendance improvement strategies for effectiveness and seek additional avenues to improve attendance rates. • Revisit the ACSF⁵ and make connections to the framework in existing programs.

Leadership

The Principal and leadership team are respected by staff and the community. Planning and change management intentions are strategic and evaluated regularly for effectiveness. Staff verified that the Principal sets a high standard for staff performance and professional behaviour.

Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The leadership team work cohesively and have collaboratively developed a unified school vision and direction. • Self-assessment and reflective practices are embedded and evidenced by the school's use of Y-charts and PMIs⁶ to capture staff discussion and decision-making. • Induction processes have a reciprocal approach: graduates are informed of school expectations, standards and operations; asked what they perceive their development and induction needs to be; and support is provided by a mentor. • An equitable expression of interest process has been established to encourage aspirants to self-identify and nominate for leadership positions within the school.
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to refine performance management processes to include peer observations, coaching and feedback cycles. • Continue to develop a distributed leadership model to assist with consistency, sustainability and ownership of whole-school programs.

Use of resources

The Principal and MCS⁷ have a sound understanding of financial management and the operation of the one-line budget. Resource allocation decisions are evidence-based and have student needs as the primary focus.

Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding allocation decisions are linked to school priority areas and targeted initiative funding is used as intended. • Finance committee meetings are held twice per term. The six member team, consisting of leaders and teachers, is experienced and members understand their roles. • Reserve accounts have been established and reviewed on a needs basis in the areas of ICT⁸, furniture replacement, playground equipment and photocopier replacement. • Resources are targeted for identified purposes and programs re-evaluated by teachers for effectiveness. Teacher evaluation results influence future funding. • A leadership decision, made to commit significant funding on human resources including EAs⁹ in every class and a thirteen class structure has been effective.
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate the efficacy of a BYOD¹⁰ program beginning with Year 4 students.

Teaching quality

The leadership team has created a shared staff culture of mutual accountability and personal responsibility. Teachers are dedicated to providing quality education for the students. EAs lead literacy intervention for SAER using evidence based programs and in-built assessments to monitor progress. Professional exchanges between staff are a regular occurrence.

Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • POLTs¹¹ have been established with the clear purpose of enhancing teacher judgement moderation, self-assessing against the NQS¹² and utilising Brightpath as a writing moderation tool. • Common terminology in literacy and numeracy lessons have been adopted by staff to support students' engagement in their learning. • Teachers value the newly established weekly DOTT¹³ sessions that are used for sharing practice and collaborative planning to ensure teachers work together to best meet the needs of the students. • Literacy and numeracy instruction is strengthened by daily session blocks. Whole-school resources, teaching strategies and student expectations are employed during these blocks, along with the school selected support resources such as T4W¹⁴ and Guided Reading. • Data literate staff analyse and plan regularly using a range of data including NAPLAN¹⁵, OEAP¹⁶, PM Benchmarks, MacqLit and school based assessments.
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The phase of learning teams will work together to create targets for groups of students to further personalise learning and 'put faces on the data'.

Student achievement and progress

Over recent years the school has created an environment conducive to learning and is now focussing on high expectations of achievement for all students. Teachers work together to plan for groups and individuals to tailor the teaching and learning program to engage students to achieve the standards set in the Western Australian Curriculum and Assessment Outline. Building on the commendable NAPLAN results of the last three years, the school has high expectations of the future student achievement.

Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2018 NAPLAN data for Years 3 and 5 have been at or above expected level with the exception of grammar and punctuation in Year 5. • Of the 30 NAPLAN assessments in Years 3 and 5 from 2016 to 2018, 27 were at or above the expected level of achievement level indicating a longitudinal positive trend. • Staff use a disciplined dialogue approach to analysing data, informing planning and selection of intervention programs for improvement in student achievement. • OEAP data are reviewed during parent-teacher meetings to inform parents and to set expectations for student achievement.
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to investigate teaching strategies which will increase the number of students receiving A and B grades.

Reviewers

Laura O'Hara
Director, Public School Review

Antony Beswick
Principal, Landsdale 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.



Lindsay Hale
Executive Director, Public Schools

References

- 1 A play-and-learn initiative for three-year-old Aboriginal children in the year before they start Kindergarten
- 2 Young Men's Christian Association
- 3 Behaviour Management Program
- 4 Students at educational risk
- 5 **Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework**
- 6 Pluses, Minuses, Implications
- 7 Manager corporate services
- 8 Information and communication technology
- 9 Education assistant
- 10 Bring your own device
- 11 Phase of learning team
- 12 National Quality Standard
- 13 Duties other than Teaching
- 14 Talk for Writing (writing program, Pre-primary – Year 3)
- 15 National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy
- 16 On-entry Assessment Program

