



Department of
Education

Shaping the future

Illawarra 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 3 year cycle, subsequent reviews are determined to occur on a one, 3 or 5 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 support 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

Illawarra Primary School is located approximately 30 kilometres from the Perth central business district in the North Metropolitan Education Region.

Established in 1981, the school has an Index of Socio-Educational Advantage of 998 (decile 5) and became an Independent Public School in 2015.

Currently there are 353 students enrolled from Kindergarten to Year 6.

Community support for the school is demonstrated through the work of the School Board and Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C).

The first Public School Review of Illawarra Primary School was conducted in Term 4 2018. This 2023 Public School Review report provides a current point of reference for the next cycle of school improvement.

School self-assessment validation

The Principal submitted a transparent school self-assessment, highlighting aspects of the school's current operations and some planning considerations for improvement.

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

- In preparation for the Public School Review, the leadership team guided a self-assessment process that engaged and incorporated the perspectives of a range of staff and school community representatives.
- All members of the administration team contributed evidence relating to school practices and performance in the domains of the Standard through the Electronic School Assessment Tool (ESAT).
- A broad range of well-informed and enthusiastic staff, students and parents contributed to the discussions held with the reviewers.
- A tour of the school added context to support the validation visit.

The following recommendations are made:

- Use the Public School Review Standard, in particular the domain foci and elaborations, as the basis for ongoing school improvement planning.
- In preparation for future reviews, ensure that all key personnel participate in the WebEx information session to fully understand expectations of the process.
- For future ESAT submissions, consider designating a review leader to coordinate the final presentation, with oversight from the Principal, to avoid repetition in the evidence presented.
- When analysing the evidence submitted, ensure the impact on student outcomes is included and that the judgement made supports meeting the Standard.

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Relationships and partnerships

This is a school invested in building strong, connected relationships with parents, carers, students and each other. Staff model and prioritise mutual respect and trust in their actions and words contributing to the high reputational regard the school has within the community.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Parents and carers value the school and many volunteers provide additional support for students. The community appreciate that staff make themselves available to discuss the interests of their children.
- The School Board has a sound understanding of its governance role and responsibilities. Members have recently completed formal training building their capacity to engage in strategic discussions and provide input into school decision making and policy. The P&C work closely with the Board to support the school.
- Collaborative processes are constructive and purposeful. Phase of Learning leaders provide support, staff plan together, share resources and moderate student work to ensure consistency of practice.
- Surveys are conducted to understand levels of satisfaction and gather the opinions of parents, students and staff.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Continue to develop partnerships beyond the school that add value to and enhance the learning opportunities for students.
- Further analyse the feedback from parents, staff and students in order to determine future strategy and adjust school approaches to better meet the needs of the community. Share the analysis and actions with stakeholders.

Learning environment

The school ensures students enjoy coming to school by creating a sense of belonging through the establishment of a welcoming and safe environment. The students are enthusiastic advocates for the school's caring, inclusive ethos delivered through a visibly strong partnership between staff, students and families.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Staff are engaged in developing a Positive Behaviour Support approach. Agreed values are understood by staff and students and a Behaviour Matrix has been established.
- Opportunities for student engagement and collaboration are supported through lunchtime clubs facilitated by staff and student leaders.
- Processes are established to ensure that students at educational risk (SAER) are identified and supported in their learning. In consultation with parents, Special Educational Need plans outline goals and strategies to support students.
- Staff are very collegiate and support each other's wellbeing through regularly checking on each other in and outside of school. The Staff Wellbeing Committee organises regular activities to support staff.
- The chaplain is a highly valued member of staff and, with a strong understanding of school processes and the contextual needs of students and staff, supports the entire community.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Revisit and upskill staff in their knowledge and integration of the Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework.
- Share attendance policy and processes with staff so they are better able to support student engagement.

Leadership

Leadership is distributed allowing interested staff opportunities to lead others in whole-school improvement through Phase of Learning and curriculum teams, data analysis, and writing and reviewing school plans.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Aspirant leaders are identified, supported and valued. Transparent processes build capacity through mentorship and development of leadership skills and attributes.
- A clear approach to performance management and development, incorporating reflection against the AITSL¹ Australian Professional Standards for Teachers, is evident. Staff reflect upon their practice and engage in observation processes aligned to school instructional priorities.
- Curriculum area leaders, drive strategic and operational planning across the school. Phase of Learning leaders, with the support of the administration team, set the agenda for collaborative meetings where data is used to inform teaching and learning practice.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Develop instructional leaders who can provide professional learning and support to staff for the implementation of agreed pedagogical practices with a focus on consistency and low variance teaching.
- As a priority, invest time in whole-school strategic planning, interrogating and understanding student data and reviewing plans and processes to ensure consistent, evidence based, low variance practice across the school.
- Review operational plans, ensuring there is a consistency in form and function, driven by student achievement SMART targets and alignment to the business plan.

Use of resources

A trusting and productive relationship between the Principal and manager corporate services ensures planning, management and monitoring processes, for the use of resources, are aligned to school operations.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Sound processes and practices are established for managing financial and human resources. An effective Finance Committee assists with financial oversight. The School Board is kept well informed of the school's financial management processes and expenditure priorities.
- Digital technology is identified as a priority in the business plan. This is supported in the school budget and a strategic approach is taken to the management of resources with a comparative assessment made on purchasing versus leasing of equipment.
- In response to data, the allocation of targeted resourcing, including the deployment of education assistants, enables the implementation of intervention approaches and support provisions.
- A combined asset and resource replacement plan ensures that funding is available to maintain modern equipment that supports teaching and learning.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Progress planning intentions to appoint an Aboriginal and Islander education officer to further build partnerships and support engagement of Aboriginal students.
- Consider the composition of the Finance Committee to reflect the diversity of roles and operations of the school.
- Review digital technology as a whole-school priority, ensuring that a data set can validate the impact the strategy is having on student achievement and progress.

Teaching quality

A highly skilled and motivated staff, individually and in collaborative phases, provide high quality evidence-based instruction to support student achievement and progress.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- An explicit teaching model underpins teaching practice in all learning areas.
- Staff are being supported in the use of Elastik to analyse individual and class data from a selection of assessments to inform classroom planning and target individual student needs.
- A handbook together with informal induction processes support existing and new staff to understand and implement whole-school practices and programs.
- Information communications technology is integrated into the classroom learning environment helping to develop the 21st century skills necessary for success in a technological world.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Utilise Teaching for Impact to reinforce beliefs about effective teaching and learning and establish an Instructional Framework ensuring consistency of practice.
- Provide whole-school professional learning around contemporary research-based understanding of effective instructional practice in literacy and numeracy.
- Revisit and formalise processes for classroom observation and feedback to strengthen whole-school practice.
- Formalise the induction program and build robust processes and support for graduate and new staff. Include guidance to implement the whole-school Instructional Framework.

Student achievement and progress

Systemic and school-based data are collected and analysed to support teaching cycles. There is a genuine desire and commitment to improve student academic achievement and progress.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Despite some recent decline in achievement, NAPLAN² results in Year 3 and Year 5 remain close to or above contextually similar schools across all assessments.
- An assessment schedule guides staff to the range of data that is collected and analysed to inform planning.
- Within Phase of Learning teams, moderation, including the use of School Curriculum and Standard Authority Judging Standards, supports teachers in ensuring comparability of student achievement across all years.
- Students at educational risk for literacy in Year 1 and Year 2 are supported through intervention using the MiniLit program. Progress is tracked with students exiting the program once attainment of a proficient standard is met.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Review student data to ascertain the need for additional intervention beyond Year 2.
- Within learning area operational plans set aspirational general and cohort specific targets for student achievement and progress.
- Use whole-school longitudinal data from contemporary, norm referenced assessments to evaluate the effectiveness of practice and programs and to inform school improvement planning.

Reviewers

Craig Skinner
Director, Public School Review

Linda Humphreys
Principal, Newton 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.

The timeframe for the next review process focusing on the leadership and teaching quality domains only, will be Term 2, 2024.

Should the school meet the Standard for these domains, a full Public School Review, inclusive of all domains, will be scheduled for 2026.



Melesha Sands
Deputy Director General, Schools

References

- 1 Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership
- 2 National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy

