



Department of
Education

Shaping the future

Northam 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 resources in alternative formats for people with accessibility needs, please contact PublicSchoolAccountability.PublicSchoolReview@education.wa.edu.au

Context

Opened in 1890, Northam Primary School is located approximately 97 kilometres north-east of Perth, within the Wheatbelt Education Region.

The school has an Index of Community and Socio-Educational Advantage rating of 948 (decile 8).

It currently enrolls 302 students from Kindergarten to Year 6.

Northam Primary School is supported by a School Council and a Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C).

The first Public School Review of Northam Primary School was conducted in Term 1, 2019. 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 comprehensive and rigorous school self-assessment.

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

- The recommendations of the 2019 Public School Review were used as a starting point for the process of self-assessment for the 2023 review.
- A large number of staff were provided access to the Electronic School Assessment Tool (ESAT) platform in order to upload evidence and enter reflections and future planned actions.
- There was alignment between the evidence selected for inclusion in the ESAT submission and the domains of the Standard.
- The Principal and senior leaders consulted broadly to ensure that a wide range of staff and school community voices were captured as part of the school's self-assessment.
- The perspectives of many community members, families and local business partners were also provided during the validation visit, alongside input from staff and students. This input significantly enhanced the review team's ability to validate the school's ESAT submission.
- Student leaders facilitated a coordinated tour of the school grounds, including the opportunity to visit every classroom during instructional time enabling the review team to validate elements of the learning environment and teaching quality domains.

The following recommendations are made:

- In future ESAT submissions, consider refining the entries to ensure coherence and avoid duplication.
- Enhance the clarity of the school's future direction by reducing the number of repeated planned actions and limiting them to those actions that are new or upscaled pieces of strategic work.

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Relationships and partnerships

Valuing the connection to Aboriginal culture, students proudly state, 'we learn about the country we stand on.' Students enjoy holding leadership roles, including recognising the work of their respected teachers.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The school has a shared dialogue with local elders and plays a role in preserving traditional language. This has led to a recent nomination for the WA Education Awards in the category of cultural responsiveness.
- The P&C has engaged parents through their 'Just One Thing' campaign. Parents are encouraged to volunteer a small contribution of time rather than small numbers committing a large amount of time. The School Council has been pivotal to the school's establishment as an Independent Public School for 2024.
- High levels of parent and student satisfaction are indicated in regular community satisfaction surveys. Wednesday notices, social media pages and staff use of Connect assists families to stay informed.
- Partnerships with local agencies such as the Community Police, the local playgroup, Aboriginal corporations and the Avon network of schools contribute positively to school events and student learning.
- Staff have a sense of belonging to the team and support the needs of students through a trauma informed approach. Leaders place trust in the abilities of staff and they are provided a voice in determining strategy.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Embed the working relationship between the school and Aboriginal Elders to strengthen connections to families while providing cultural awareness professional learning to staff.
- Continue to build on student voice through the planned establishment of a student council that consists of both student leaders and student representatives from Pre-primary to Year 5.

Learning environment

Parents appreciate the effort that the school makes to meet the needs of their children. Staff have high levels of understanding of the learning support that they can provide for students with additional needs.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Recent School-wide Evaluation Tool (SET) data demonstrates an 80 per cent implementation of consistent approaches through the shared Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) values: Responsible, Respect, Persevere and Care. Staff are trained in Classroom Management Strategies.
- The valued chaplain runs the In Real Life and Equip programs with girls and boys respectively, focused on building levels of resilience, emotional regulation and personal confidence in selected groups of students.
- Ambitious targets are set to drive positive student attendance supported by case management with families and home visits, where required.
- The learning support coordinator collects data from teachers when there are concerns that students may be at risk and engages the school psychologist to support families and students.
- Zones of Regulation check in walls for all students are a feature of classrooms, as are private independent learning areas which are utilised to provide a low stimulus environment for identified students.
- Students have a strong understanding of school processes such as PBS and the reward systems. Their transition to local high schools is managed through communicative relationships and shared activities.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Continue to collect and respond to the data from student wellbeing surveys.
- Maintain the focus on positive behaviour through embedding the new reward and recognition systems.

Leadership

Trust, alignment, passion and rigour describe the approach of staff to their work. This is guided by a highly respected senior and middle leadership team who model processes and provide support.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Explicit alignment exists between the school's vision, strategic and operational plans and the Department's plans. Staff connection to school planning and its application at classroom level is tangible.
- Through the middle leadership team, there are numerous opportunities for staff to lead aspects of school improvement including numeracy, literacy, cultural responsiveness, PBS, National Quality Standard and classroom ICT¹.
- Regular feedback on teaching is provided by line managers through the agreed observation and feedback protocols of 'tickled pink' and 'green for growth', aligned to the 9 daily work pad expectations.
- The performance development process incorporates goal setting and observations of teaching. Department templates guide performance development for all teaching and allied professional staff.
- A suite of professional learning is provided to staff to support their implementation of agreed programs and approaches, including the provision of Classroom Management Strategies training to all teaching staff.
- Staff hold high levels of comfort with their participation in school self-assessment, leading to a situation where strategic and operational planning is an inclusive and authentically consultative process.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Consult with the School Council on the construction of the business plan and all areas of strategy.
- Provide aspirant leaders the opportunity to complete formal leadership professional learning such as the Aspirant Leaders, Future Leaders, Emerging and Team Leaders programs.

Use of resources

The committed manager corporate services, prudent in the management of finances, has undertaken a progressive alignment of the school's spending and resource allocation to meet planning and strategic priorities.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Finance Committee members have a good understanding of their role in guiding the school's resource allocation. Financial training is provided for staff and financial transparency extends to the School Council.
- Staff can draw links between the use of student characteristics funding and the needs of students for whom this funding is intended, including the programs, human resources and physical spaces that are provided.
- Funding and resource support for the school is provided via Foodbank, mining companies and businesses in other local industries. Locally raised revenue through Partnership Acceptance Learning Sharing grants, Landcare Australia Limited and FISH (Foundation for Indigenous Sustainable Health) provide learning and physical environment resources for students.
- The ICT Committee manages the strategic deployment of devices such as iPads, laptops and interactive whiteboards for student learning.
- The workforce plan is reviewed annually in conjunction with the School Council as part of the annual timeline of agenda items. The plan is clear in its stated priorities for the recruitment of new staff.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Plan for resources to be allocated to meet the new business plan across the 3 year cycle, ensuring links between spending and the plan are clear.
- Focus future workforce planning to ensue a mixture of experience is maintained to best meet emerging demographic and contemporary community need.

Teaching quality

Staff have demonstrated commitment in establishing shared evidence-based approaches to quality teaching through the 9 daily work pad expectations and scope and sequence documents. These support teachers to plan efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of all students.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Training in the Letters and Sounds intervention program is provided to all education assistants and Aboriginal and Islander education officers under the phonics initiative funding. Students respond well to the program being delivered by familiar staff.
- The case management process supports the explicit, twice per term tracking of every student's progress in literacy and numeracy, guided by the data from systemic and school assessments.
- The data informed daily review process reinforces previously learned material for students.
- Professional learning on high impact pedagogy is provided to staff and follow up includes coaching, observations and feedback to support the maintenance of consistent teaching practice.
- Celebrations of the improvements that students make in classrooms are shared school-wide, with staff keen to recognise outstanding results achieved by students in their colleagues' classrooms.
- The Northam Way documents provide a quick reference for staff on whole-school priorities and procedures, including expected classroom practice and the structure of the school day.

Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Restructure the vocabulary, grammar and syntax scope and sequence documents to drive teacher practice and improve student outcomes.

Student achievement and progress

Students engage in conversations with teaching staff on their own case management outcomes, progress and goals. Students have a good concept of their areas of strength and future growth through engaging with data.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- A repository of live student achievement data is provided to staff via Teams, allowing them to engage in real time and collaboratively with peers on tracking the progress of their students.
- There is a tenacity for the establishment and maintenance of a culture of high expectations for student achievement. Staff have highlighted future improvements in the technical application of grammar as a priority.
- The moderation of teacher judgements within the school occurs through dialogue when engaging with Brightpath, Progressive Achievement Tests in Mathematics and Reading, as well as the application of the SCISA² Judging Standards.
- A comprehensive and regularly reviewed assessment schedule, providing school-wide data collection, is used by teachers. Staff modify the schedule to highlight their own areas of responsibility.
- The partnership with SSEN:D³ has assisted staff to write SMART goals for the creation and regular review of Individual Education Plans for students at educational risk.
- Parents value the opportunity to be engaged with staff in displays of their child's work. Progress and achievement form part of School Council dialogue and students' achievements are celebrated.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Further embed the school's case management approach based on data and target setting for individual students.
- Provide staff with opportunities to moderate teacher judgements with their peers in other schools.
- Maintain a school-wide focus on setting high expectations for levels of student achievement and progress.

Reviewers

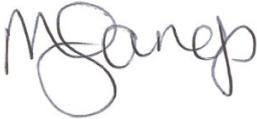
Rohan Smith
Director, Public School Review

Danielle Roache
**Principal, Boddington District High School
Peer Reviewer**

Endorsement

Based on this report, I endorse the commendations and recommendations made by the review team regarding your school's performance.

You will receive formal notification in the 2 terms leading up to your school's next scheduled review. This notification will be provided in 2026.



Melesha Sands
Deputy Director General, Schools

References

- 1 Information and communications technology
- 2 School Curriculum and Standards Authority
- 3 School of Special Educational Needs: Disability