



Department of
Education

D21/0178035

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Spencer Park Primary School

Public School Review

March 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

Spencer Park Primary School is situated in Albany on the south coast of Western Australia, approximately 420 kilometres south-east of Perth within the Southwest Education Region.

The school has a rich history within the community, having been established in 1959. In 2013, Spencer Park Primary School became an Independent Public School.

Currently, there are 287 students enrolled from Kindergarten to Year 6, of which approximately 20 per cent are Aboriginal. The school has an Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage of 922 (decile 9).

A KindiLink program is offered for Aboriginal children aged 0 to 3 years. Programs are available at the school's Early Childhood Centre as well as offsite at Coolangarras Barmah.

The School Board has input into the business plan and strategic directions and monitoring of student performance data. There is an active Parents and Citizens' Association supporting the school and the co-located Spencer Park Education Support Centre.

School self-assessment validation

The Principal submitted a self-assessment with accompanying evidence for each domain of the Standard.

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

- A summary of the school's performance in each domain of the Standard was provided in the Electronic School Assessment Tool (ESAT) submission, including background, strengths and needs.
- During the validation visit, a broad range of leaders, staff and community members provided information and elaborated on evidence, adding significant value to the ESAT submission.
- The Principal actively provided ongoing and authentic opportunities for staff to reflect and participate in school self-assessment processes, including reflection against the Standard in preparation for the school review.
- School Board members engaged in preparation for the school review through reflection on the school's identified areas of strength and those for improvement.
- The school developed a comprehensive summary of school performance data, acknowledging areas for celebration and outlining improvements.

The following recommendations are made:

- In future ESAT submissions, strengthen evidence analysis and impact through the inclusion of succinct statements whilst also ensuring there is sufficient information to illustrate the school's performance against the Standard in each domain.
- Continue to engage staff in school self-assessment processes based on the questions: How are we going? How do we know? What are we doing to improve?

Public School Review

Relationships and partnerships

An ethos of respect, collaboration and care is apparent across the school, underpinned by a focus on staff empowerment and the building of trust at all levels of the school community.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Parents value the school and the levels of staff care and support for their children. Students expressed appreciation for the school's sense of safety, acceptance and inclusion.
- A vibrant School Board, with diverse membership reflective of the school community, provides valued support and is invested in the school's strategic directions.
- Providing opportunities for staff communication, connection and collaboration is a clear school focus gathering momentum through collaborative teams.
- Relationships with Aboriginal Elders and mentors, together with a partnership with Great Southern Aboriginal Health Service, are contributing to positive learning and wellbeing outcomes for students.
- Building community and family partnerships is a feature of the early years' Coolangarras Barmah program and is contributing to positive family connections and a strengthened sense of trust in the school.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Continue to build relationships with Aboriginal families and community members to support student engagement and participation.
- Continue to share the school's positive programs and strengths with the wider community.
- Build on the positive and trusting family partnerships developed in Coolangarras Barmah to support ongoing family engagement in Pre-primary and Year 1.

Learning environment

A supportive, inclusive and student-centred learning environment is founded on a commitment to nurture and meet the needs of every child, in partnership with families and the community.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- A range of strategies and interventions, including case management and attendance tracking, have been employed to improve student attendance.
- The student services team, comprising the school psychologist, deputy principal, school nurse and chaplain, works collaboratively to identify students at educational risk (SAER) and implement interventions, strategies and case management to support individual student needs.
- The school has a values-based approach to managing student behaviour. Targeted education assistant support for behaviour and the implementation of Zones of Regulation is contributing to student self-regulation and improved behaviour outcomes.
- Valued support from the AIEO¹ is provided within the Coolangarras Barmah program.

Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Further progress the whole-school approach to behaviour through clear alignment of processes and development of a visual representation to support messaging.

Leadership

The Principal's leadership of a culture of professional trust is evolving through a consultative and capacity building approach. This is evident in the range of collaborative groups that share decision making and contribute to the school's ongoing improvement agenda.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- A number of experienced teacher leaders collaborate with colleagues and provide opportunities for peer observation and collegial support for new staff.
- Distributed leadership and collaborative structures provide opportunities for teachers, with scope to develop their leadership capacity.
- A School Curriculum Committee, including staff from each learning area, contributes to school planning through a data-driven curriculum review process. Improvements are identified, clarified in curriculum documents and implemented through collaborative structures.
- The school's Aboriginal Education Plan outlines the outcomes and activities to be undertaken by the school and are aligned to the Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework.
- Staff indicate that performance management processes, including opportunities for observation, are contributing to their professional growth.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Further develop the school's distributed leadership structure through clarification of roles and the continued provision of support for leadership development.
- Continue to shape, reinforce and communicate the school's improvement journey narrative of high expectations for learning and wellbeing.

Use of resources

The Principal, manager corporate services and Finance Committee work collaboratively to develop the school budget in alignment with the business and operational plans.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The allocation and training of two specialist education assistants in Discrete Trial Training and literacy interventions is contributing to student outcomes.
- Planning for ICT² ensures sufficient devices and equipment are available to support student learning and educational programs.
- Reserve replacement plans are regularly updated to facilitate ongoing equipment replacement.
- Sound decision making is evident in the prioritisation of school promotion in the community to ensure ongoing enrolments and sustainability of resources.

Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Continue to progress workforce management planning and the monitoring of school enrolments.

Teaching quality

The school is committed to developing high quality teaching and learning, with a focus on explicit teaching balanced with enquiry learning. Teachers are motivated to create engaging learning experiences, such as the outdoor science classroom, valued by staff and students.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The development of collaborative structures is enabling staff collaboration on curriculum, pedagogy and moderation, contributing to the development of consistent practices.
- Differentiation is enabled through a range of adjustments including visual supports, differentiated 'warm ups' and cross-setting for reading and mathematics.
- The implementation of YDM³ and ORIGO mathematics programs in line with the school's Explicit Teaching methodology is focused on progressing students' numeracy achievement.
- Student progress in writing is being prioritised through the implementation of the Seven Steps and Talk for Writing programs.
- Teachers use school-based assessment data to inform class planning and differentiation.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Further develop whole-school consistent practices through professional learning and structured collaboration focused on student learning and achievement.
- Continue to embed whole-school approaches to writing and numeracy and use data to monitor efficacy of programs and practices.

Student achievement and progress

A culture of data and evidence-based decision making is evident at the school. The collection and analysis of whole-school data is used to drive improvements and inform school planning and decision making.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- 2019 NAPLAN⁴ Year 3 and Year 5 Reading and Grammar and Punctuation student achievement was above like schools.
- Detailed data analysis, drawing on a range of system and school-based assessments, is providing a clear picture for the school of its strengths and key areas for improvement.
- Ongoing assessment of SAER is enabled through MiniLit, MultiLit, MacqLit, PM Benchmark and Progressive Achievement Tests.
- Case conferences inform the development of Individual Education Plans, which are frequently reviewed and provide specific goals for students.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Progress the focus on increasing student performance in numeracy, writing and spelling.
- Continue intentions to develop teachers' analysis of achievement and progress of Aboriginal students to inform the adjustment of teaching practices.
- Use fine-grained data analysis to identify learning gaps, set goals, and monitor progress at the individual and class level, and establish a disciplined dialogue analysis of whole-school longitudinal data.

Reviewers

Kim McCollum
Director, Public School Review

Cathy Allen
Principal, Clifton Park 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.



Melesha Sands
A/Deputy Director General, Schools

References

- 1 Aboriginal and Islander education officer
- 2 Information and communications technology
- 3 YuMi Deadly Maths
- 4 National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy