



Department of
Education

Shaping the future

Exmouth District High 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 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 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 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.

For further information or resource in alternative formats for people with accessibility needs, please contact PublicSchoolAccountability.PublicSchoolReview@education.wa.edu.au

Context

Exmouth District High School is located in a small coastal community in the remote north-west of Western Australia, approximately 1250 kilometres from Perth. Situated within the Midwest Education Region, the area is surrounded by the Cape Range National Park, and is the gateway to the Ningaloo Reef, a World Heritage-listed site.

The Baiyungu, West Thalanyji and Yinikurtura people are acknowledged as the original custodians of the land and water in this region.

The school was established in 1965 and since that time facilities have been upgraded through a major building program. In 2015, the school gained Independent Public School status.

Currently, there are 442 students enrolled from Kindergarten to Year 12. Exmouth District High School has an Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage of 1016 (decile 4).

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

School self-assessment validation

The Principal submitted a comprehensive school self-assessment.

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

- The Electronic School Assessment Tool (ESAT) submission provided an account of the current school context and actions planned for the future.
- Staff were involved in the preparation of the ESAT submission. They were provided an opportunity to select a domain to discuss and reflect on the evidence to be submitted.
- The school's self-assessment was enhanced by conversations with members of the school community, who contributed their reflections and engaged actively during the validation visit.
- The Principal and staff demonstrated a genuine understanding of the context of the school, its development to date, and the direction for future planning.
- Involvement in the preparation of the ESAT was viewed positively by staff as a validation of their work.

The following recommendation is made:

- Consider using the ESAT to record performance evidence as part of the ongoing school self-assessment process.

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Relationships and partnerships

The new leadership team understands the importance of building a strong collegial culture, founded on mutual respect, trust and support amongst staff, students and families.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Over the past few years, the school has strengthened its relationship and engagement with a range of local groups and organisations. It is now viewed as working in partnership with, and valued by, the community.
- Parents report communication processes at the school keep them well informed regarding day-to-day school activities and events.
- Positive and mutually respectful relationships between teachers and parents are evident. Parents report that staff are readily accessible and provide regular updates on their child's progress and wellbeing.
- Strong and sustainable partnerships have been established with a number of foundations and organisations, providing meaningful learning opportunities for students.
- School governance is strong, with the School Board demonstrating a clear understanding of its role and purpose.
- Engaging with the Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework, and in partnership with Aboriginal elders, the school is building community cultural responsiveness and understanding.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- In partnership with the School Board, develop a communication strategy that celebrates school and student achievements. Raise the community's awareness of the educational opportunities available for all students.
- Work with student leaders to create opportunities for primary and secondary students to build positive relationships that foster engagement, promote learning, develop student wellbeing and generate a sense of identity of one school.

Learning environment

The school prides itself on offering a safe and caring environment for students and staff, with an evolving culture that supports quality learning and positive behaviours.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Improving student attendance is a high priority. The strategy of placing an attendance officer in the front office ensures a high level of support, care and connection between students, staff and parents.
- The school is committed to strengthening processes to provide both primary and secondary students with a genuine voice in decision making.
- The school has introduced Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) and established the expectations of 'Respect, Responsible, Aim High'. To support the implementation of PBS, and a consistent approach to the management of student behaviour, staff are provided with Classroom Management Strategies (CMS) professional learning.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Develop a whole-school policy for students at educational risk to guide a consistent approach to track and monitor students' identified as requiring academic, social-emotional or behaviour support.
- Establish a whole-school case management model to provide a wraparound service to support the whole child.
- Consolidate the school's behaviour management approach with a view to aligning the PBS and CMS principles. Develop shared understanding and consistent practice across the whole school.

Leadership

The leadership team demonstrates a unified purpose and articulates a vision for the essential elements of school improvement. Whole-school planning processes are established and staff demonstrate a commitment to the journey.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The new leadership has brought a strategic lens to the school's organisational structure and operations, and is working with staff to implement a distributed leadership model that encourages school-wide, shared responsibility for decision making and support.
- An Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework working party has been established to develop an agreed action plan for the school. In collaboration with the Aboriginal and Islander education officer and local elders, a draft operational plan is under construction and focused on identifying community members to work in partnership and co-lead the implementation of the Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework.
- Leadership is encouraged at all levels and authentic opportunities are provided that enable staff to take on leadership roles across the school.
- School leaders promote a culture of self-reflection. Through the current High Performing Teams structure, opportunities are provided for staff to engage in peer observation.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Maintain the commitment to leadership development through the realignment of High Performing Teams. Develop a senior leadership structure that provides a stronger connection between the classroom and executive team.
- The working party to continue to lead the development of the school's Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework action plan and its implementation.
- Develop an operational plan to create a culturally safe and engaging environment, and develop understanding and respect for local Aboriginal history, culture and language among staff and students.

Use of resources

Financial planning and budget management are in place to make certain that resource allocations relate specifically to the improvement of student outcomes.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The School Board and Finance Committee are kept informed of the school's financial management processes, with meetings held each term.
- Areas of concern, relating to the school's asset and resource replacement plans, have been identified by the Principal and manager corporate services. Processes have been put into place to address the issues.
- The school is proactive in sourcing additional funding to supplement and support student engagement programs and activities.
- Workforce planning and staffing requirements are based on student profile information.
- Targeted initiative and student characteristics funding is directed to achieve outcomes and meet the obligations of the Funding Agreement for Schools.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Strengthen current budgeting practices through the engagement of staff in submitting costs for projects and learning areas, with explicit linking of resources to the school's business plan.
- Create explicit links between operational plan strategies and school budgets, with alignment to cost centres.

Teaching quality

Staff articulate the shared belief that all students are capable of learning if motivated and given appropriate opportunities and differentiated support. There is a focus on improvement through the development of teaching expertise.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The school has the foundation of an agreed instructional model and staff demonstrate an understanding of the importance of consistency in teaching practice. School leaders are working with staff to embed the model, knowing staff are at various stages of their professional journeys.
- Implementation of the Seven Steps to Writing Success program has resulted in a consistency in the teaching of writing in Year 7 to Year 9 and contributed to significant improvement in student performance.
- Teaching staff and education assistants monitor intervention programs and share feedback on student progress, demonstrating the genuine, supportive relationships that exist between them.
- Through the High Performing Teams structure, staff collaboration provides the opportunity for staff to discuss student performance and review teaching plans and strategies.
- Year 5 to Year 7 teachers place a high value on preparing their students for secondary schooling. Students report that they feel well supported in their transition to the secondary phase of schooling.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Focus on strengthening and embedding the understanding and implementation of the whole-school instructional model. Clearly articulate the connection between primary and secondary practice.
- Undertake mapping of the curriculum and development of scope and sequence documents to support clear connection in the learning pathways for students from Year 1 to Year 10.
- Continue to explore opportunities for extension and enrichment programs for gifted and talented students.

Student achievement and progress

The school is consolidating its approach to the collection and analysis of student data. Teachers understand the importance of consistent judgements and clear communication of student progress to parents.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Professional learning, moderation and collaboration within and between High Performing Teams has enabled consistency in teacher judgement and grade alignment.
- All staff participate in the review of student progress data and use the information to guide school planning.
- An assessment schedule for the collection of systemic and school-based data is used to track student progress and achievement.
- Individual student records and performance information are maintained in a 'Cumulative Folder'. The folder is used by teachers to support planning and as part of the school yearly handover processes.
- SchoolTV provides the school with data relating to social issues that are of interest and/or concern to parents and students.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Undertake a review of primary data sets with an emphasis on gaining a better understanding of student achievement and progress with a particular focus on Year 3 to Year 5 students.
- Continue to build staff data literacy and engagement with whole-school data and build an understanding of the connectivity and implications for whole-school approaches to quality teaching.
- Work with staff to develop consistency in the assessment and reporting of Attitude, Behaviour and Effort.

Reviewers

Lou Zeid
Director, Public School Review

Eleanor Hughes
Principal, Joseph Banks Secondary College
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 3, 2024.



Melesha Sands
Deputy Director General, Schools