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Education

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# Exmouth District High School

## Public School Review

# Public School Review

## Purpose

All Western Australian public schools are reviewed by the Department of Education's School and Principal Review directorate. A review gives assurance to the local community, the Minister for Education 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 [PublicSchoolReview@education.wa.edu.au](mailto:PublicSchoolReview@education.wa.edu.au)

## Context

Exmouth District High School is located in the remote north-west of Western Australia, approximately 1250 kilometres from Perth, within the Midwest Education Region.

Established in 1965, the school gained Independent Public School status in 2015.

Currently, there are 536 students enrolled from Kindergarten to Year 12 (K-12). Exmouth District High School has an Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage of 968 (decile 7).

The school is supported by an active Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) and School Board.

The first Public School Review of Exmouth District High School was conducted in Term 3, 2021. This 2025 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 reflective and celebratory school self-assessment.

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

- Preparation for the Public School Review was completed by the executive team, with responsibility distributed through associated portfolios.
- The Electronic School Assessment Tool (ESAT) submission provided a holistic reflection of the school's strengths and areas of growth against the Standard, the domain foci and elaborations respectively, complemented by planned actions to support the continued school improvement agenda.
- Authentic reflections were a feature of the ESAT submission, demonstrating thoughtful inquiry. Alignment between performance evidence, judgements about priorities and planning for future improvement was evident.
- The Public School Review was viewed positively as an opportunity to reflect on the impact of the school's dedication to a rigorous school improvement agenda since the previous Public School Review, giving cause to celebrate the fidelity with which whole-school practices are developing and propelling the school forward.
- A broad range of staff and students provided insightful contributions during discussions held with the reviewers during the validation visit, providing transparent and consistent reflections in support of the school's strategic improvement agenda.
- A purposeful tour of the school and its facilities by the Principal provided valuable insights into the operation of the school and intended future actions, adding much to the positive tone of the validation process.
- Committed and passionate School Board, P&C members and parents contributed open and honest perspectives. They described their appreciation and student-centred operation, as well as their individual and collective aspirations for the school, adding value to the validation process.

The following recommendation is made:

- Employ a coordinated approach to determine the most impactful placement of evidence in the ESAT submission to reduce repetition of analysis.

## Relationships and partnerships

Genuine and respectful approaches have been taken by the school, led by the Principal, to build a strong, interconnected K-12 community that works together to provide the best possible environment for learning and growth. Subsequently, open and transparent communication, trust and respect have developed.

### Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Intentional emphasis on embedding respectful relationships and productive collaboration into documented expectations, including a staff commitment statement and collaborative meeting structure, along with staff role modelling, has resulted in measurably improved communication processes and productive connections.
- Established committees, including the Reconciliation Action Plan team, maintain a focus and alignment to school priorities. This is further strengthened through the school's active engagement in the Exmouth Early Years Network in partnership with Ngala, the Shire of Exmouth, WA Country Health Service and early learning groups.
- Expansion of relationships with TAFE<sup>1</sup>, local employers and supports such as Apprenticeships Support Australia and ATC Work Smart has created new and varied opportunities for students to explore career pathways, gain practical skills and qualifications and build networks.
- The views of parents, students and staff are sought through formal surveys, with school responsiveness to feedback evident. Respectful relationships also allow open and informal feedback processes to thrive.

### Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Expand opportunities for families, stakeholders and community members to experience firsthand the calibre of opportunities provided to students and strengthen promotional messaging.

## Learning environment

The school has transformed the learning environment through the development a culture of high expectations, high care and tailored support. Clearly defined processes support the pre-conditions for learning to be met. This culture is underpinned by staff training and a strong moral purpose to support wellbeing and engagement.

### Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- A tailored and reliable pastoral approach to promoting positive behaviour and engagement is being collaboratively developed. Positive Recognition Guidelines and explicit teaching of school-wide behaviour expectations have strengthened consistency and is complemented by rigorous data collection processes.
- The formation of a student support hub and transitional classroom has enabled a structured system of support for students and staff. Students at educational risk are proactively identified, supported and closely monitored to promote attendance, foster engagement and facilitate targeted and tiered interventions.
- The school embraces cultural responsiveness, recognising and celebrating the diverse backgrounds of its students through inclusive practices, respectful relationships and culturally significant events. The introduction of the Yarning Circle group has been valued and fostered a sense of belonging.
- Purpose-built learning environments such as a School of Isolated and Distance Education classroom, commercial kitchen, nature play area and sensory spaces provide students with opportunities to access specialist learning opportunities, develop life skills, as well as secure, structured spaces to support regulation.

### Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Ensure the consistent application of agreed whole-school classroom management strategies in all classrooms supported by targeted professional learning.
- Establish a sustainable and clearly defined K-12 student leadership model that empowers student voice in school decision making and strengthens meaningful connections between students and staff.

## Leadership

The Principal is strategically leading a passionate, contemporary and dedicated team. Underpinning the strategic intent of the school's leadership planning is the belief that a collaborative professional growth culture of continuous improvement will cultivate key leadership attributes for all staff.

## Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- An enhanced executive leadership structure provides clear whole-school oversight, ensuring strategic focus and continuity of data informed decision making. This has deepened leadership capacity, strengthened collaboration and communication and provided structures to drive consistent practice and improvement.
- Purposeful alignment between structures and processes fortifies planning and decision making. This is evident in the articulation of the school's focus on targeting continual and aspirational improvement.
- A distributed, yet connected leadership model, provides professional growth for staff by creating targeted opportunities to enhance their knowledge and skills, in addition to formalised opportunities provided through engagement in professional learning such as the Emerging and Team Leaders program. Consequently, there is a deep understanding of, and buy-in to, the school's improvement agenda.
- Highly skilled allied professionals embrace professional learning to develop skills that enhance their contribution to the school's improvement agenda and student outcomes. The introduction of an education assistant - lead is testament to the regard with which they are held at the school.

## Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Further build the instructional leadership capacity of middle leaders to support the implementation of consistent and connected practice across the school, aligned to Teaching for Impact.
- Formalise peer observation and feedback processes.

## Use of resources

Astute financial acumen ensures fiscal and responsive management of resources, providing all students with the best possible learning opportunities.

## Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Workforce planning is strategic and comprehensive, providing a clear sense of the operating context of the school and responsive to enrolment growth, changing demographics and student and community needs.
- Sound financial processes and procedures ensure key priorities are resourced. Funding decisions are made in the best interests of students, with opportunities and experiences that enhance their teaching and learning programs prioritised.
- Targeted funding, linked with school priorities in science, technology, engineering, the arts and mathematics (STEAM), support a dedicated STEAM leader, timetabled STEAMlab classes, and are bolstered by grant procurement and sponsorship. This investment extends student learning and strengthens the school's commitment to innovative, future-focused education.
- Significant investment in targeted evidence-based professional learning to fortify teaching and learning and student wellbeing has been prioritised with effect. This is evidenced by sustained positive outcomes in NAPLAN<sup>2</sup>, and WACE<sup>3</sup> achievement and qualification attainment recognised within the Midwest region.
- Collaboration drives continual improvement in teaching and learning and the school empowers staff through the devotion of investment in purposeful collaborative planning. This dedicated time strengthens consistency of practice, supports data-informed decision making and enhances shared professional growth.

## Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Proceed with the intention to explicitly link resource allocations with strategic priorities in school planning documents to support financial transparency.

<b>Teaching quality</b>
Staff demonstrate passionate enthusiasm for their core business of teaching and learning. This is underpinned by shared beliefs, common language and clear expectations about how staff collaborate to engage students and optimise academic, social and emotional growth and development.
<b>Commendations</b>
The review team validate the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A strong foundation is provided by the school-wide instructional framework BEACON. Consistent routines and quality approaches such as daily reviews, learning intentions and success criteria are delivered with increasing fidelity by committed staff, who are advocates for the school's teaching and learning approaches.</li> <li>• Sharpening the future direction of classroom instruction is evident and complemented by engagement in the Centre for Excellence in Explicit Teaching for Literacy internship. The school recognises the provision of quality feedback to students on learning as essential to support the development of student aspirations.</li> <li>• A targeted focus on academic extension and enrichment is apparent with the delivery of the STEAMlab program. This program challenges students to think critically, solve problems creatively and collaborate effectively. Participation in tournaments such as FIRST LEGO League demonstrates the STEAM capabilities of Exmouth District High School students, who were crowned winners of the 2025 tournament.</li> <li>• The school prioritises early identification and intervention and the implementation of programs such as LanguageLift and MiniLit produce tangible outcomes. Trained staff also deliver Tier 2 evidence-based intervention programs through the student support hub, including DRUMBEAT, GRIT and Rock and Water.</li> </ul>
<b>Recommendations</b>
The review team support the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build staff capability in data-informed curriculum differentiation to effectively provide targeted, in-class learning support and extension opportunities to meet diverse student needs.</li> <li>• Proceed with the intention to implement an explicit approach to teaching aligned to the BEACON instructional model and implement measures to ensure uniformity, fidelity and low variability of teacher practice.</li> </ul>
<b>Student achievement and progress</b>
The school is committed to the continual development of staff data literacy, routine whole-school data collection and analysis expectations and evidence-based decision making.
<b>Commendations</b>
The review team validate the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A culture of continuous improvement is evident with data coaches leading collaborative conversations and planning. Staff recognise the need to share responsibility for comprehensive data tracking and analysis, using platforms such as Elastik and Student Achievement Information System, to support targeted performance improvements.</li> <li>• Regular meetings to analyse data, identify trends and plan targeted actions. Lines of inquiry are pursued using a disciplined dialogue framework enabling consistent progress monitoring, shared language and visible impact on teaching and learning to be acknowledged and celebrated.</li> <li>• The school proudly supports diverse and meaningful pathways tailored to the strengths and aspirations of students. Strong senior school pathways are provided and community supported workplace learning opportunities are highly valued. These opportunities are further bolstered by the School of Isolated and Distance Education who provide ATAR<sup>4</sup> and General courses and support the delivery of hybrid models and bespoke support programs.</li> <li>• Consistent judgements based on the Western Australian Curriculum grade descriptors, moderation processes and practices, and the use of the School Curriculum and Standards Authority Judging Standards to support teachers during formal reporting are evident and support student success.</li> </ul>
<b>Recommendation</b>
The review team support the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embed data review cycles and disciplined dialogue to create a culture of shared responsibility and accountability for every student's achievement and progress.</li> </ul>

Reviewers	
Kate Wilson <b>Director, Public School Review</b>	Kylie Cattaway <b>Principal, Merredin College</b> <b>Peer Reviewer</b>

## 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 2028.



Steve Watson  
**Deputy Director General, Schools**

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## References

- 1 Technical and Further Education
- 2 National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy
- 3 Western Australian Certificate of Education
- 4 Australian Tertiary Admission Rank