



Department of
Education

Shaping the future

Dalkeith 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 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

Dalkeith Primary School is located approximately eight kilometres from the Perth central business district, within the North Metropolitan Education Region. In 2012, the school gained Independent Public School status.

Opened in 1938, the school has well-established grounds with mature trees. Originally opening with an enrolment of 36 students, there are now 318 students enrolled from Kindergarten to Year 6. Dalkeith Primary School has an Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage of 1199 (decile 1).

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

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:

- A thorough and forensic approach to preparing the Electronic School Assessment Tool (ESAT) submission ensured that a positive period of self-reflection occurred. This self-reflection also contributed to the construction of the school's new business plan, resulting in the alignment of whole-school planning to the domains of the School Improvement and Accountability Framework (SIAF).
- The school's self-assessment provided the reviewers a clear picture of the current strategic priorities of the school.
- Evidence presented in the ESAT submission was strongly aligned to the foci of the Standard for each domain of the SIAF.
- Overview documents clarified the purpose of evidence included in the submission.
- A broad cross-section of school leaders, teachers, allied professionals, students, parents and community representatives strongly endorsed the evidence described in the submission and elaborated further throughout the validation visit.

The following recommendations are made:

- Source the support of colleagues from other schools to determine the most efficient method of conveying the school's improvement journey in future ESAT submissions.
- Limit the inclusion of evidence to that which directly aligns with school improvement measures and strategies. Reflect on the guidance received from colleagues to determine the suitability of evidence to include.

Public School Review

Relationships and partnerships

A comprehensive 'whole child – whole village' approach to developing the school community is shared equally by staff, students and families.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The trained and educated School Board, encompassing staff, families and community members, provides strong support for school strategy through data analysis and disciplined dialogue.
- The vibrant P&C contributes to a healthy and unified sense of school community through regular events and initiatives, such as the Dalkeith Dads Group, as well as raising funds for school projects.
- Staff welcome collaboration opportunities with families so that they are involved and informed about the academic and non-academic progress of their children. Families and students acknowledge and appreciate the range of specialist programs that add value to the school's curriculum.
- The school regularly seeks feedback from families and students on critical issues and responds to meet their needs through changes in strategy and operations.
- Priority has been placed on restoring a community feel to the school, after the COVID-19 pandemic impacted upon planned annual events and opportunities for routine parent engagement.
- The Bricks for Change program exemplifies the efforts of the school to maintain a sense of global citizenship by students under pandemic conditions.

Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Formally evaluate the effectiveness of recent changes to school communication processes with families and the fidelity with which newly published school guidelines have been implemented and followed.

Learning environment

Dalkeith Primary School adopts a balanced approach of innovation and tradition in the provision of a safe and nurturing learning environment. This underpins growth and support for student learning, and strengthens the delivery of differentiation for students at educational risk.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Learning occurs both in and beyond the classroom. Staff make innovative use of outdoor spaces to broaden student inquiry and supplement indoor experiences.
- Staff view the learning environment as the third teacher in their classroom. Efforts are made to carefully place resources, environmental print and diverse furnishings to support learning.
- Where appropriate, student ownership of learning is encouraged and there is a commitment to authentic implementation of the Walker Learning Approach.
- Interventions for students with special needs occur across all year levels. A new process of tracking students at educational risk has been implemented to strengthen support.
- The provision of a nurturing offsite early childhood environment builds a sense of belonging among students before transitioning to the main school campus.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Continue to focus on the improvement of outdoor play and learning spaces to enhance educational and social-emotional needs of students.
- Refine processes for tracking students at educational risk, and for communication with essential school staff around student needs in collaboration with the School Psychology Service.

Leadership

A unified team with skills and confidence to distribute school leadership opportunities, galvanises the school community. Expertise and vulnerability to change are balanced to ensure the learning community thrives.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Trust, based on collective efficacy and a professional growth mindset, is a key element of the relationship between school leaders and staff.
- Staff are encouraged to take on individual or small group action learning projects to broaden the evidence-based approaches informing teaching in the school. Project results and data are shared with the whole staff at regular forums.
- Staff have engaged with the Western Australian Future Leaders Framework. This has involved assigning mentors and development of a leadership plan, all of which contributes positively to school strategic planning and assessment.
- Leaders approach change in a measured and evidence-stimulated way. Protocols are in place to ensure change is managed with a balance between workload and strategic necessity.
- The performance growth process employed with staff includes measurable targets for student achievement, strengthening staff connectedness to the process.
- Student leadership is manifest in a range of traditional, peer support (buddy) and philanthropic opportunities. Students in senior years are expected to assume a leadership role, to varying degrees, as part of their personal growth.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Implement measures to connect the individual and group action learning projects of teaching staff to the business plan priorities of the school.
- Maintain a focus on the rigorous methodology adopted by the school in coaching for performance growth, and monitor the effectiveness of coaching undertaken by school leaders.

Use of resources

The Finance Committee comprises an accountable balance of school and community representatives. This allows for collaboration around financial and resource management. Resource allocations are aligned to their impact on student achievement.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The P&C prioritises its expenditure on curriculum and learning program support, while simultaneously promoting and publicising the school's building trust fund to families and the community.
- Transparent and clearly articulated financial processes are in place. The manager corporate services possesses a thorough knowledge of the ways in which financial distribution supports student learning and aligned outcomes.
- Teachers are encouraged to plan collaboratively for classroom expenditure, with deadlines for spending ensuring that year level budgets are spent on the identified students.
- The School Board is informed in a timely manner and rigorously assesses the school's finances as a matter of routine.

Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Further refine processes for evaluating the impact of resourcing decisions and apply these to budget preparations and funding applications submitted to the Finance Committee.

Teaching quality

Staff exhibit a shared respect for the expertise of their colleagues, creating a dialogue of expansive challenge and inquiry aligned to teaching practice.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Staff display a knowledge and working experience of contemporary pedagogical research and utilise this with dexterity in classrooms. Highly skilled and valued education assistants work collaboratively support student learning and pedagogical approaches.
- The Dalkeith Instructional Framework provides a guide to teaching throughout the school. The framework incorporates a compilation of evidence gathered by teachers and mechanisms for reflection to assess student mastery of concepts taught.
- Adoption of action learning projects, such as Socratic Questioning, informs the inquiry-based learning approach used by staff.
- Moderation of teacher judgements and practice occurs through the use of tools such as Brightpath, and builds comparability into the assessment of student progress between classrooms and year levels.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Explore the use of High Impact Teaching Strategies in the Dalkeith Instructional Framework.
- Continue to implement disciplined dialogue, and peer and line manager classroom observations to strengthen teacher practice, and develop a shared understanding among staff of the practice of 'highly accomplished' teachers aligned to the AITSL¹ Australian Professional Standards for Teachers.

Student achievement and progress

The new business plan summarises the whole-school data snapshot and provides a strategic roadmap for stretching student outcomes in school and system assessments. Unapologetically ambitious targets for student achievement underpin data analyses and approaches to teaching.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Staff routinely participate in analysis of student achievement data and possess a firm picture of the progress of students in their classes. This analysis is used to guide teacher planning.
- A file of student achievement data and analysis assists the transition of students between year levels. This data informs future planning for student progress.
- Gifted and special educational needs students are identified for additional support. An expectation is placed on staff to adapt classroom plans for students.
- Individual staff articulate their student achievement targets as part of their professional growth plans, including those that pertain to the whole-class, small groups and individual students in their care.
- Aspirational school-wide business plan targets are set for students' achievements. Strategies to support meeting these targets are reviewed and implemented as required.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Continue to support accuracy in grade alignment with that of system and diagnostic assessments through teacher moderation and other appropriate comparability measures.
- Implement a school-wide approach to measuring and an understanding of student Attitude, Behaviour and Effort attributes.

Reviewers

Rohan Smith
Director, Public School Review

Anna Alford
Principal, Sorrento 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 3, 2024.



Melesha Sands
Deputy Director General, Schools

References

1 Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership