



Department of
Education

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Falls Road Primary School

Public School Review

February 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

Established in 1979 in the Perth hills, Falls Road Primary School is located in the suburb of Lesmurdie, approximately 25 kilometres south-east of the Perth central business district, within the South Metropolitan Education Region.

Falls Road Primary School was granted Independent Public School status in 2011. There are currently 309 students enrolled from Kindergarten to Year 6. The school has an Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage of 1074 (decile 2).

A focus on the whole child through exposure to academic, artistic, social and sporting learning experiences aims to provide all students with opportunities to thrive, and enables them to participate as active and responsible members of society.

Parents and carers are frequently engaged in a range of activities across the school. The school is supported by strong and active partnerships with the Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) and the School Board.

School self-assessment validation

The Principal submitted a sound school self-assessment.

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

- Aligned to the Standard, a summary statement was submitted for each of the domains, which briefly outlined key indicators of the school's performance.
- Preparing and engaging in the process associated with the school review was viewed as a celebration and opportunity to acknowledge areas of improvement.
- Collaborative processes underpinned the school self-assessment in preparation for the Public School Review.
- Discussions with the school community and staff during the validation visit further enhanced the school self-assessment.

The following recommendations are made:

- Pay explicit attention to the quality of evidence used to describe the essential indicators of performance, as outlined in the Standard.
- Ensure there are clear and transparent links between the summary statements and the evidence submitted to indicate levels of performance.
- Embed the language of self-assessment across all aspects of the school's ongoing self-assessment processes.

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Relationships and partnerships

Viewed as a valued extension of the community, the school engages collaboratively with a range of external community groups and associations to provide varied and authentic learning experiences for students.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Informal and formal opportunities to collaborate between staff are valued and positive.
- An engaged and valued P&C reflects the positive school culture. Members further enhance community involvement through facilitation of school events and fundraising opportunities that support the school.
- The School Board fulfils its governance role enthusiastically and supports the Principal in leading the strategic intent of the school.
- A range of established communication processes and the use of multiple platforms effectively engages the staff and school community.
- Parent, staff and student National School Opinion Survey data reflect significantly high levels of satisfaction across all areas of the school's performance.

Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Review and embed a sustainable plan that clearly articulates school-community partnerships, with clear links to school priorities, funding and outcomes.

Learning environment

The physical environment is engaging and an extension of the indoor learning spaces, with a varied range of opportunities for learning through play. A focus on every child thriving with their needs met underpins the planning and provision of programs.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Support for parents and students includes the Positive Parenting Program seminars and a speech pathology program.
- Whole-school events, including parent nights, celebrate creativity and cultural inclusivity through the display of works developed in the visual arts programs.
- A shared understanding of play-based learning is evidenced through a policy that aims to ensure consistency and continuity throughout the early years.
- Processes and procedures to support students at educational risk are sound, with targeted approaches and interventions in place to support the individual needs of students.
- Introduction of a whole-school, social skills warm-up has established consistency and continuity of a positive learning culture through shared expectations and language.

Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Continue to engage in processes that support regular review of policy and procedures, with a focus on the allocation of resourcing for student support.

Leadership

The leadership team is viewed as visible, supportive and committed to developing a shared understanding of the school's improvement journey. Staff commit to this journey through the varied leadership roles across the school.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- In a quest to embed consistent, connected practice, a partnership with the Centre for Excellence was established to undertake an action-based research project to lead the school through a process of identifying literacy strengths and challenges.
- Collaborative reviews are undertaken annually to review strategies identified in the operational plans, with an unwavering focus on collaboration and consistency.
- Staff receive useful feedback about their practice through formal performance management and development processes and regular interactions and feedback from the leadership team.
- Student leaders are engaged in key roles in the school and explicitly supported through the provision of a student leadership program focused on 'mindsets'.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Engage all staff in reflection of current practice aligned to the Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework. Identify and document key areas for improvement, with consideration to obtaining feedback from parents.
- Enhance existing leadership structures through role clarity and facilitation of collective leadership meetings focused on school priorities of consistent practice and data-driven decision making.

Use of resources

Financial management of the one-line budget is sound. Student needs are planned for and addressed through the effective deployment of physical, financial and human resources.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The Finance Committee meets regularly to provide financial oversight, monitoring school budgets and expenditure.
- Planning for and provision of ICT¹ and associated resources are effectively managed. The school is well resourced with a range of contemporary technologies to support teaching and learning.
- A clear purpose underpins the management and resourcing of physical learning spaces, including the STEM² and reading rooms.
- Allocation of budgets and alignment of resourcing occurs with consideration of the school context and respective needs of students.
- Workforce planning is regularly reviewed in the context of student needs, identifying workforce gaps and developing strategies.

Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Continue to regularly monitor budgets and planning intentions for student support to ensure balanced budgets, and transparent, data-driven decision making.

Teaching quality

Staff are passionate and committed to improving outcomes for students through consistent implementation of whole-school programs.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Staff engage in moderation processes, including the implementation of Brightpath and collaborative opportunities aligned to the Judging Standards.
- A partnership with Maida Vale Primary School involving classroom observations of warm-up activities has added significant value for staff and supported professional discussions and reflections to build teacher confidence.
- Since 2020, an internship through the Centre for Excellence in the explicit teaching of literacy has supported the school to embed explicit teaching approaches. Staff have developed scope and sequence frameworks, and strengthened their knowledge and skills as a result of intensive professional learning.
- Peer observation processes are implemented and viewed as an important vehicle to provide positive feedback and encouragement.
- Students and staff have access to a range of technologies and online programs that add value to the teaching and learning program.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Provide opportunities for the upskilling of staff in the interrogation and analysis of data.
- Continue to prioritise moderation across all year levels and all aspects of literacy and numeracy.
- Build on existing peer observation approaches to embed a model focused on sharing of strengths with alignment to identified areas.

Student achievement and progress

A range of systemic and school data is collected to support teaching cycles. Teacher expertise in the consistent data analysis and application is developing.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Analysis of school and systemic numeracy data has resulted in a focus on problem solving and a review of programs.
- Engagement with the Best Performance Datahub system to analyse school-based data is supporting the school's intention to use datasets more effectively.
- Student overviews document key areas of assessment and learning progress aligned to text books and behaviours.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Embed data-disciplined approaches to the analysis of systemic and school-based data to inform and drive the provision of academic programs.
- Undertake fine grained analyses of NAPLAN³ data, using the dashboard to upskill and support all teachers to address identified areas in planning.

Reviewers


Rebecca Bope
Director, Public School Review

Jennifer Allsop
Principal, Sutherland Dianella 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 Information and communications technology
- 2 Science, technology, engineering, mathematics
- 3 National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy