



Department of
Education

Shaping the future

South Thornlie 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 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 PublicSchoolAccountability.PublicSchoolReview@education.wa.edu.au

Context

Opened in 1976, South Thornlie Primary School is situated within the South Metropolitan Education Region in the suburb of Thornlie, approximately 20 kilometres from the Perth central business district.

The school currently enrolls 436 students from Kindergarten to Year 6. It has an Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage rating of 994 (decile 5).

Members of the School Board and the Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) are well regarded and a strong source of advocacy and support for the school.

The first Public School Review of South Thornlie Primary School was conducted in Term 4, 2019. This 2023 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 comprehensive and rigorous school self-assessment.

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

- A culture of reflective school self-assessment, as the foundation for effective planning and continuous improvement, was evident at the strategic and operational levels.
- Collaborative processes have underpinned the school self-assessment in preparation for the Public School Review. Led by the administration team, all staff and the School Board provided a reflection of the school's performance and planned actions for improvement for each domain of the Standard.
- The Electronic School Assessment Tool (ESAT) submission was constructed in alignment with the Standard. A broad range of inter-related and credible evidence was selected for analysis, with alignment between evidence of performance and planning for improvement.
- A range of well-informed and enthusiastic staff, students, parents and community partners contributed to the discussions held with the reviewers during the validation visit.
- The school's leadership reported the Public School Review was a positive experience that has extended their understanding of the school's performance and enabled them to celebrate their significant progress and achievements since the previous review.
- A tour of identified areas of the school further enriched the validation process providing a greater understanding of evidence presented in relation to the learning environment.

The following recommendations are made:

- Carefully consider the choice of evidence and analysis in each domain and include comments in the ESAT, or annotations on the evidence itself, to identify the impact on student outcomes.
- Contemplate reducing the evidence provided to that which has the strongest impact on student learning and demonstrates an on balanced representation of the Standard.

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Relationships and partnerships

Aspirational thinking and individualised negotiation has yielded tremendous benefits for the school and its students. Sustainable partnerships with 16 universities and 17 community organisations create unique opportunities that support all students to succeed, irrespective of their personal circumstances.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The sustainable school partnerships initiative enhances the learning opportunities for all students and provides timely health and educational support for students and families that would otherwise be unavailable to them.
- Collaboration between staff is highly valued and is building a culture of collective efficacy. Staff review data, plan, share resources and moderate student work to ensure consistency of practice.
- Parents identify communication as a strength of the school. Families are kept well-informed about what is happening in the school, classroom and with their child. Communication is through digital platforms, with alternative methods available for families without access, and translation available when required.
- A dynamic School Board is invested in the school's ongoing improvement and capacity to meet the distinct needs of students and families. The informed Board Chair works in collaboration with Board members and the Principal to ensure that their governance role is fulfilled.
- Strategies are in place to ensure regular, valid feedback from parents and staff including the National School Opinion Survey. Data collected indicates strong satisfaction with the school.

Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Continue to work closely with the local secondary school to enhance educational opportunities for students.

Learning environment

A safe, positive, and supportive learning environment is embedded within the school with a focus on developing the whole-child. Physical, academic, social, and emotional wellbeing are priorities in the development of every student.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Effective practices are established to support regular attendance including: SMS messaging; letters; phone calls; case conferences; and home visits. These are resulting in school attendance being consistently better than like schools and the state average.
- A whole-school approach to respectful relationships and social justice education is established through the Safe, Openhearted, Accepting and Resilient (SOAR) program.
- Genuine and authentic approaches to building and fostering cultural responsiveness are a feature of the school. Opportunities to deepen understandings and build connections, with the Aboriginal community and families with English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D), are embraced.
- A focus on staff wellbeing is evident. They support one another through social opportunities, staff recognitions, celebrations and by regularly checking on each other, in and outside of school.
- Processes are established to ensure that students at educational risk are identified and supported in their learning. In consultation with parents, SEN¹ plans outline goals and strategies to support students.

Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Utilise a recognised social and emotional student survey tool to collect and analyse data to inform whole-school health and wellbeing planning.

Leadership

Led by a visible and committed leadership team, that model high expectations for all, the school has clearly defined its vision, values and direction. Authentic collaboration and inclusion drive an improvement agenda focused on maximising the academic, social and emotional outcomes of students.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Teachers and allied professionals are actively encouraged to have high aspirations and take on leadership roles. Staff can nominate or be recommended for the school leadership program that provides professional learning and opportunities to build skills and capabilities.
- Change is considered and implemented strategically. Staff are supported with professional learning, mentoring and coaching. Feedback is welcome throughout the implementation with support provided in a timely manner.
- A clear approach to the performance management and development for teaching staff is evident utilising the AITSL² Australian Professional Standards for Teachers and the Department's template.
- Staff are supported by the Principal and deputy principals to develop instructional skills. A team teaching approach provides modelling, observation and feedback of teaching strategies with a focus on low variance practice.
- Staff are engaged in the development of the business plan and ongoing review of operational plans through the unique snapshot function with consideration to 'What's Working Well?', 'Even Better If?', and 'Where To Next?'.
- Student leadership is diverse and valued with a range of initiatives established. Students across the school are provided with chances to lead, support others, share feedback and inform change.

Use of resources

A trusting and productive relationship between the Principal and manager of corporate services (MCS) ensures planning, management and monitoring processes for the use of resources are aligned to school operations. The provision of facilities, resources and staffing that meet students' needs are clear priorities.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Supported by the Finance Committee, the Principal and MCS plan, review and monitor the budget. Financial and human resource planning is transparent, evidence-based and supports the school's strategic direction. The School Board is kept well-informed of the school's financial processes and spending priorities.
- Workforce planning is proactive, with consideration given to enrolment fluctuations and the movement and requirements of students and staff.
- A small but effective P&C adds value to the school's programs, supplementing improvements to the aesthetics of the grounds and buildings and supporting student engagement in school activities.
- A priority is placed on ensuring a safe and welcoming learning environment through resourcing improvements to the physical spaces within the school.
- Clear links between student characteristics funding and the allocation of student resources are evident. This includes staffing an EAL/D leader, and employment of education assistants to support the delivery of intervention programs for students requiring additional support.
- The school's human resources and physical assets are maximised to support students, through actively seeking Departmental assistance, donations, grants and lease agreements.

Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- To support transparency of financial operations, actively encourage staff to join the Finance Committee.

Teaching quality

A highly collaborative and motivated staff work within a culture of high expectations and continuous improvement that is underpinned by the belief that quality teaching is integral to positive student outcomes.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- School developed learning area planning tools provide staff with instructional strategies, curriculum and scope and sequences to ensure consistency in content delivery and adherence to the Western Australian curriculum.
- Professional learning is appropriately targeted, based on evidence and data, and is being delivered increasingly using the expertise of internal presenters.
- Time is dedicated to the interrogation of data where the leadership team supports staff to understand, analyse and use data to inform planning.
- Staff are supported to implement whole-school programs including: Heggerty Phonemic Awareness; MultiLit; Promoting Literacy Development (PLD) and Maths Plus.
- Targeted Achievement Programs (TAP) provide individualised support for students at educational risk and EAL/D students to cater for their specific learning needs.
- Assessments and reporting on student achievement and progress inform both students and parents. High levels of participation in parent teacher interviews, and the inclusion of interpreters when needed, ensures parents have a complete understanding of their child's achievement and progress.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- To enhance consistency of instruction, use the Quality Teaching Strategy as a foundation to clarify an agreed and documented lesson design.
- Formalise processes for classroom observation and feedback to provide targeted support to teachers in line with whole-school expectations.

Student achievement and progress

Successful schools afford high priority to the collection and analysis of, and response to, data and what it is telling them about student performance. The school has established a culture where the importance of data informed decision making is embedded across classrooms.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Over the past 5 years, NAPLAN³ achievement in Year 3 and Year 5 had been consistently above like schools in almost every assessment.
- Informed by a comprehensive assessment schedule teachers gather, analyse and use a wide range of evidence-based assessments for planning, tracking and reporting on student achievement.
- Business and operational plans are developed, incorporating aspirational and specific student achievement targets and strategies, that support teaching and learning and drive improved levels of student achievement.
- The SCSA⁴ Judging Standards, Progressive Achievement Test data and the Brightpath assessment tool are used in collaborative discussions on standards and the moderation of teacher judgements.

Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Formalise a comprehensive, evidence-based, response to intervention program, to provide tiered support to enhance achievement and progress for students at educational risk.

Reviewers

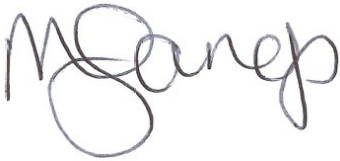
Craig Skinner
Director, Public School Review

Louise O'Donovan
Principal, Wattleup East 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.

You will receive formal notification in the 2 terms leading up to your school's scheduled review. This notification will be provided in 2028.



Melesha Sands
Deputy Director General, Schools

References

- 1 Special Educational Need
- 2 Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership
- 3 National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy
- 4 School Curriculum and Standards Authority