



Department of
Education

D21/0269234

Public education
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Alkimos Beach Primary School

Public School Review

May 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

Alkimos Beach Primary School is located approximately 45 kilometres from the Perth central business district in the North Metropolitan Education Region.

The school opened as an Independent Public School in 2017 and provides educational programs for students from Kindergarten to Year 6.

Currently, 759 students are enrolled. The school has an Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage of 1025 (decile 4).

The contemporary buildings include purpose-built art, science and music rooms and a large undercover area set within attractive landscaped gardens. Alkimos Beach Primary School is host to the Atlantis Group Outside School Hours Care.

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

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:

- The Electronic School Assessment Tool (ESAT) submission and feedback provided during the validation visit delivered an in-depth account of the school context and operations in addressing its improvement agenda.
- Judgements submitted in the school self-assessment were established through widespread collaboration. Consensus and general agreement resulted from discussions and extensive analysis of the evidence selected.
- Embedded reflective practices on school performance provided a substantial base upon which to prepare effectively for the Public School Review.
- Staff, student, families and community members participated enthusiastically in the validation process, demonstrating a genuine understanding of their school.
- Staff shared that the review process provided an opportunity to celebrate the growth that has been achieved since the school opened in 2017.

The following recommendation is made:

- Continue to use the ESAT as a repository for evidence as part of the school's ongoing self-assessment practices and review cycle.

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Relationships and partnerships

An embedded collaborative and consultative culture, underpinned by mutual respect, trust and open communication has been established. This has contributed to the unequivocal support and high levels of satisfaction expressed by families, staff and students for their school.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The school understands the contextual circumstances of its families, and has been proactive in providing services to support connected relationships and meaningful partnerships with and between them.
- Communication is layered and targeted, ensuring parents are provided with regular and timely information. The Connect platform is valued by parents as evidenced by the high level of access.
- Development of meaningful, positive relationships with families is prioritised. The Talk Play Share Pre-kindergarten program allows the school to establish relationships with parents prior to their children commencing school.
- The School Board and P&C are active and keen participants in and to the school, representing the community perspective and providing strong support in their advocacy whilst “creating fun for the kids”.
- Partnerships fostered by the school with agencies such as CPFS¹, YouthCARE and HelpingMinds, have supported students’ social and emotional needs, achieving positive outcomes for all concerned.
- The school has been proactive in developing strong connections with the local Aboriginal community. Partnerships established with a local Aboriginal group, DevelopmentWA, Aboriginal Elders and families have contributed to the fostering of sustainable, beneficial relationships.

Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Continue to monitor and review the effectiveness of Connect as the primary communication tool.

Learning environment

In spite of the harsh weather conditions of their location, the school has been innovative and deliberate in creating a welcoming, engaging and close-knit community hub. Staff, students and families express a deep sense of belonging, inclusion and pride in their school.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Student health and wellbeing is prioritised. A suite of data informs the decisions made, resulting in a bespoke approach to the implementation of programs and services to support students and families.
- Cultural responsiveness is well considered and intentionally planned and delivered. The collaboration with Elders, Aboriginal families and strong visual messaging has resulted in a culturally responsive and engaging environment that goes beyond the school gates.
- A review of the NQS² has led to a resolute commitment to develop a learning environment that facilitates intentional play-based learning. The well-resourced and considered approach being implemented promotes a high level of student engagement and child agency.
- A comprehensive structure, supported through the work of the student services team and education assistants, has been established to identify students at educational risk and provide targeted intervention.
- A safe and orderly environment has been established. Zones of Regulation, the You Can Do It and I Do It programs have successfully improved the capacity of students to self-regulate.

Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Continue to build staff knowledge through access to online cultural appreciation professional learning.

Leadership

The Principal has taken a deliberate leadership approach. Thoughts, opinions and strengths of all are harnessed, resulting in a non-hierarchical approach to leadership where everyone plays a part in shaping the direction of the school to meet current and future needs of the students and community.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- A collaborative and consultative process of communication has ensured staff and the School Board have input into, and understanding of, the school's vision and priorities.
- A distributed leadership model has been thoughtfully structured and is supported through professional learning. Clear roles and responsibilities ensure the focus remains on student achievement and improvement.
- The school is committed to building the capacity of curriculum leaders to support teachers in the implementation and embedding of whole-school programs. Provision of professional learning from a variety of sources, including Teacher Development Schools and the West Coast Language Development Centre Outreach program, is building leaders' curriculum content expertise and their capability to lead.
- Change management processes are well embedded, with the school taking a strategic and measured approach to the introduction of new initiatives. Change is managed in a timely, informed and inclusive manner, maximising staff buy-in and successful outcomes.
- The school invests significantly in developing leaders' capacity and capability through a scaffolded and highly supportive professional growth process.

Use of resources

The approach of the Principal and manager corporate services to the management of the budget is measured, innovative and student focused. The establishment of a positive working relationship with their Public Private Partnership provider ensures budget planning is undertaken with agility to adapt and adjust to the changing needs of the school as it grows.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- A sophisticated understanding of school resourcing, focused on links to school priorities and supporting evidence, is employed to maximum effect by the manager corporate services.
- Strategic workforce planning has been skilfully structured to cater for future growth and recruitment of staff with the skillsets required to continue meeting the context and direction of the school.
- The manager corporate services provides strong consultation and guidance for the School Board, Finance Committee and cost centre managers in building financial literacy and an understanding of budget management to maximise student outcomes.
- The prudent use of reserve funds has enabled the distributed leadership model to thrive through the provision of professional learning and time for leaders to develop and lead their portfolios.
- A well-crafted financial planning document for the reserve accounts ensures timely replacement of equipment and ongoing enhancement of the physical environment.
- The development of an induction booklet provides guidance and direction on school procedures and processes for all staff.

Teaching quality

The shared, school-wide embedded teaching and learning beliefs underpin teacher practice and reflect what they, as a staff, stand for. High levels of teacher efficacy and commitment by all staff to be accountable and responsible for every student's journey, has led to a collaborative, reflective and focused teaching culture.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The school has deliberately created the conditions for quality teaching to occur in every classroom through purposeful curriculum leadership roles, staffing structures, use of evidence and a strong culture of collaborative practice.
- Scaffolded structures, notably peer observation and instructional rounds, mentoring, coaching and targeted professional learning support the development of consistent teaching practice.
- A strong and embedded culture of reflective practice has strengthened the capacity of staff to implement targeted, evidence-based programs with fidelity. It provides for ongoing examination of the impact of their practice on student achievement and progress.
- Meaningful, fine-grained data analysis informs teaching practice. This ensures consistency and sustainability of student learning, enabling staff to identify and differentiate programs for students with a range of educational needs.

Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Continue to use digital technology, linked to Visible Thinking and STEM³, in the differentiation of learning.

Student achievement and progress

Staff are committed to setting high expectations for their students and themselves. High levels of data literacy and a solution-based mindset defines their responsive actions to anomalies in student performance.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The school has been reflective and responsive in understanding the achievement of their students. Implementation of evidence-informed programs, such as synthetic phonics, guided reading and a critical intervention program, has resulted in improvements in student progress and achievement.
- There is a focus on developing the skills of teachers to apply whole-school programs to their teaching. This includes scope and sequences based on critical pathways and curriculum teacher leaders guiding fidelity of practice and consistency of implementation.
- A suite of data such as On-entry Assessment Program, Kindergarten Assessment Tool, Phonological Awareness and Progressive Achievement Tests has developed staff capability to use data to inform classroom planning and practice. This has resulted in steady improvements in most areas of the English curriculum.
- Teachers are gaining a greater awareness of the alignment between grade allocation and student achievement through close attention to moderation, particularly for writing.
- The school has established an accessible, centralised student achievement database for the collation, analysis and tracking of student progress, mitigating the risk of the lack of longitudinal data.

Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Continue to embed data-disciplined approaches to inform and drive the provision of academic extension.

Reviewers

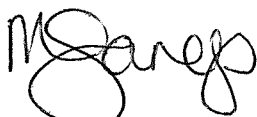
Maxine Augustson
Director, Public School Review

Tanya Uren
Principal, Flinders Park 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 2, 2024.



Melesha Sands
Deputy Director General, Schools

References

- 1 Department of Communities – Child Protection and Family Support
- 2 National Quality Standard
- 3 Science, technology, engineering, mathematics

