Department of Education

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Sutherland Dianella Primary School

Public School Review

July 2019

PUBLIC SCHOOL REVIEW

Purpose

All Western Australian public schools are reviewed every three years 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 that a school is operating effectively and 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.

The principal provides the review team with a self-assessment of the school's performance based on evidence gathered by the principal and staff. Information validated by the review team is considered before and during the school visit. This forms the basis for the school review report. The report is provided to the principal, the chair of the school board/council and the Regional Executive Director.

Expectations of schools

For all Western Australian public schools, expectations are set out in either: the Delivery and Performance Agreement, which is an agreement between the Department (represented by the Director General), school (represented by the principal) and school board (represented by the school board chair); or, the Principals' Statement of Expectations and the Funding Agreement for Schools.

School performance rating

This performance rating is based on information gained from the self-assessment submission and the validation process. It is focussed on a review of the following areas of school performance: relationships and partnerships; learning environment; leadership; use of resources; teaching quality; and student achievement and progress.

The school's performance rating is:

✓	**Effective**
	The school demonstrates effective practice in creating the conditions required for student success.

	Needs Improvement
	The school has aspects of its practice below expectations and needs supported action to improve student success.

Context

Sutherland Primary School was established on Sutherland Avenue in Dianella in 1966. The present school was created following an amalgamation between Sutherland and Dianella primary schools becoming Sutherland Dianella Primary School in 1996.

Located approximately eight kilometres from the Perth central business district, the school is in the North Metropolitan Education Region.

Sutherland Dianella Primary School has an Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage rating of 1071). It currently enrols 355 students from Kindergarten to Year 6.

The school was chosen as a Teacher Development School in 2016 and 2017 and works alongside partner schools in the Mount Lawley Hub.

Sutherland Dianella Primary School gained Independent Public School status in 2015 and has an active School Board and Parents and Citizens' Association, encouraging parents to become involved in events within the school and with the wider community.

School self-assessment validation

The Principal submitted a comprehensive and rigorous school self-assessment.

The following aspects are confirmed:

- The Electronic School Assessment Tool (ESAT) submission and additional information provided during the validation visit delivered an in-depth account of the school context, processes and practices in addressing its improvement agenda.

- The school's high quality ESAT submission was enhanced further by conversations held with members of the school community during the validation visit.

- A culture of reflective school assessment as the foundation for effective planning and continuous improvement was evident at all levels within the school.

- A broad scope of performance evidence was selected for the review with planned actions aligned to judgements made.

- High levels of staff engagement and collaboration in the school assessment process is evidence of an embedded culture of reflection and improvement.

- Staff demonstrate ownership for student success with professional and personal responsibilities and obligations understood.

The following recommendation is made:

- Continue to use the ESAT as a repository for sources of evidence and planned responses as part of the annual school assessment cycle, inclusive of the review year.

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Relationships and partnerships

Building meaningful relationships has been a specific focus for leaders. Affirmative perceptions about school direction and operations are reflected in the passionate commitment of staff. This has resulted in a high level of collegiality and staff morale.

Effectiveness	The review team validate the following: • NSOS[1] data reflects positive and respectful relationships between staff, parents and students. • Quality relationships are developed and fostered in positive classroom environments and enhanced through practices of support generated by the Health and Wellbeing Committee. • School Board representatives engage actively in consultation about school direction. They advocate strongly for the school, are committed to their role and add value to the school improvement process. • Highly effective communication has resulted in school direction being articulated clearly for all members of the school community. • Key partnerships have been established with Curtin University, schools, community and industry representatives to enhance student opportunities.
Improvements	The review team support the following action: • Continue to monitor progress against set targets in the business plan and operational plan regularly, through whole-school staff meetings.

Learning environment

An inclusive, caring, and welcoming staff culture supports students to learn in a safe, calm and orderly learning environment. Well-established student services structures and practices ensure a highly effective case management program meets the social/emotional, behavioural and learning needs.

Effectiveness	The review team validate the following: • Attendance concerns are addressed effectively through proactive and structured processes to identify, monitor and communicate regularly. • Proactive programs and structures have been embedded to support student engagement, resulting in improved attendance and behaviour. • Students at educational risk are formally identified, supported and monitored effectively for improvement. • Student feedback regarding their teaching and learning experience has been embraced by staff. They have developed a toolkit of effective feedback strategies and frameworks. • A whole-school and community focus on sustainability and outdoor play has been incorporated successfully to align with curriculum opportunities.
Improvements	The review team support the following action: • Maintain the focus on support for engagement and enrichment programs for students in Year 1 to Year 6.

Leadership

School processes, practices and structures are aligned strategically and monitored effectively by appropriate checks and balances. The highly unified leadership team has created and embedded a respectful, collaborative and engaging work environment where staff commit willingly to the school improvement agenda.

Effectiveness	The review team validate the following:
	• The leaders, all staff and School Board have established and are invested in, and committed to, the vision as central to operational decision-making.
	• Transparent, consultative decision making processes, founded on a strong evidence base, have served to generate high levels of commitment to the school's strategic directions.
	• Change has been managed at a pace that builds acceptance and commitment with consideration of the need to balance whole-school, student and staff needs.
	• Distributed leadership opportunities are undertaken enthusiastically by staff to satisfy strategic and operational need. This is complemented by consistent support and modelling of expectations by leaders.
	• The school has invested in ensuring that MESH[2] teams develop schedules and learning area policies to drive a consistent and connected approach to whole-school planning.
Improvements	The review team support the following action:
	• Continue to focus on developing a deeper and richer understanding of Aboriginal culture to enhance responsiveness and to make new links with the wider community.

Use of resources

Strategic and operational resourcing in meeting the responsibilities of the DPA[3] and student centred funding model, is appropriate to address the priority needs of current students and future directions. Judicious oversight ensures financial management practices are compliant.

Effectiveness	The review team validate the following:
	• Regular and specific monitoring of business plan targets by the Board as part of the cycle of self-review, ensures a deep understanding of progress, achievement and resourcing for key initiatives.
	• Resourcing is committed to essential support for the research-based whole-school curriculum programs and targeted intervention strategies.
	• Workforce planning is strategic, providing a high quality workforce committed to sustainable programs and practice. Key workforce gaps have been identified and planned actions developed.
	• Evidence-based decision-making underpins resource management and deployment. Clear and defensible links exist between school budgeting and business plan focus areas.
Improvements	The review team support the following action:
	• Continue to plan strategically for a collaborative DOTT[4] model and ensure that workforce planning allows recruitment needs to be met.

Teaching quality

Shared understandings regarding best practice in delivering high quality teaching and learning, have been developed collaboratively by staff. Leaders' expectations are articulated clearly and accepted uniformly to align with staff beliefs and drive classroom practice.

Effectiveness	The review team validate the following:
	• Consistent delivery of teaching and learning programs is embedded across the school using theories of 'visible learning' and a 'growth mindset'.
	• The key link between effective teaching practice, collaborative teams and pedagogy has led to embedding the school developed 'Best Practice in Hand' model successfully.
	• The MESH curriculum teams, with membership of all teaching staff, have a strong sense of ownership over curriculum directions and meet regularly to drive, implement and evaluate plans for programs and activities.
	• Targeted strategies including: Jolly Phonics; Talk 4 Writing; Sound Waves; Origo Maths; MiniLit; and PATs[5], support curriculum and assessment.
	• Teaching staff receive regular feedback to inform their teaching and learning programs as part of transparent PMD&A[6] processes aligned to the AITSL[7] Australian Professional Standards for Teachers and school priorities.
	• A comprehensive tracking spreadsheet has been developed to inform student handover processes and enhance seamless teaching and learning.
Improvements	The review team support the following action:
	• Continue to prioritise and resource MESH meetings to drive strategic direction for curriculum areas.

Student achievement and progress

Analysis of systemic and school-based student achievement data informs planning and pedagogical practice. Staff capacity to interrogate these data and modify teaching pedagogy effectively has resulted in student performance within expected ranges consistently.

Effectiveness	The review team validate the following:
	• Student achievement data in NAPLAN[8] (Year 3 and Year 5) has been similar to like schools consistently, since 2015.
	• Student progress and achievement (Year 3 to Year 5) was higher than like schools in numeracy, reading, spelling and writing in 2018.
	• A data wall has been established as a visual representation of whole-school, cohort and individual standards of achievement. Students are rated below, at, above or well above the Year standard and programs are differentiated to accommodate student need.
	• Staff have unpacked the ABE[9] standards and incorporated this language in teaching programs. Students reflect on their ABE through a reflection template which is then verified and/or adjusted by the teacher.
Improvements	The review team support the following action:
	• Formalise the triangulation of student academic, SEL[10] and student services data to better inform teaching staff at the beginning of each year.

Reviewers

Brett Hunt
Director, Public School Review

Carolyn Nunn
Principal, Parkerville Primary School
Peer Reviewer

Endorsement

Based on this report, I endorse your school performance rating of 'effective'.

Your next school review is scheduled for 2022.

Stephen Baxter
A/Deputy Director General, Schools

References

1   National School Opinion Survey
2   Mathematics, English, Science and Humanities and Social Sciences
3   Delivery and Performance Agreement
4   Duties other than teaching
5   Progressive Achievement Test
6   Performance management, development and accountability
7   Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership
8   National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy
9   Attitude, behaviour and effort
10 Social and emotional learning