Department of Education

GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Shaping the future

Connolly Primary School

Public School Review

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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

Connolly Primary School opened in 1991 and is located approximately 30 kilometres from the Perth central business district, in the North Metropolitan Education Region.

It has an Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage of 1059 (decile 2).

Currently, there are 396 students enrolled from Kindergarten to Year 6. In 2012, the school became an Independent Public School.

Community support for the school is demonstrated through the work of the School Board and Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C).

The first Public School Review of Connolly Primary School was conducted in Term 4, 2021. This 2024 Public School Review report provides a current point of reference for the next cycle of school improvement.

School self-assessment validation

A comprehensive and rigorous school self-assessment was submitted by the school.

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

- The school's self-assessment process was a comprehensive review of strategic direction, processes, and performance and enabled the executive team to understand the school's current reality, celebrate strengths, and identify areas for improvement.
- Staff rigorously assessed all 6 domains of the Standard during meetings, school development days, and within their learning communities.
- Consultation and collaboration allowed staff engagement in critical self-reflection, evaluating both their practice and areas for growth, which strengthened the school's continuous improvement efforts.
- Innovative strategies, like the 'Table Talk' initiative and targeted resource allocation, allowed staff to actively engage in self-reflection and improvement planning. Staff reported that they 'felt heard'.
- Both teaching staff and allied professionals contributed to the self-assessment process, with the School Improvement Team (SIT), composed of teacher leaders from each phase of learning, playing a pivotal role in guiding improvement efforts within their professional learning communities (PLCs) and at the leadership level.
- Validation meetings strengthened the review team's understanding of the evidence provided in the school's Electronic School Assessment Tool submission. Participants delivered strong and consistent messages that built on claims in all domains throughout these meetings.

The following recommendation is made:

- Consider making improvement actions more targeted towards the identification of the 'Big Rocks' for improvement in each domain of the Standard.

Public School Review

Relationships and partnerships

The school actively seeks to establish and maintain engaging relationships and partnerships both within and beyond the school. There is a strong sense of pride in the school and a tangible feeling that parents, staff and the community are united in their support of the children.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Staff relationships are constructive, purposeful and contribute to a positive culture where staff feel valued, connected, and consulted. The PLCs and SIT prioritise staff voice which ensures clarity and a shared vision.
- Targeted connections with the Ocean Reef Education Network, universities and strong links with allied services including: Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, SSEN: D[1], SSEN: BE[2], SSEN: MMH[3], local paediatricians, psychologists, psychiatrists, and other health practitioners support positive learning outcomes for all students.
- A communication framework provides clarity about the communication modes used by the school. Whole-school emails, Seesaw, newsletters, Facebook, notes home and the school's website, with urgent updates sent via MGM Wireless messaging, ensure transparent, two-way communication.
- The School Board and P&C are cohesive, dedicated, and efficient. The P&C foster a positive school environment through fundraising events and the School Board provides strong governance in school planning and decision making.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Develop a marketing strategy to celebrate and promote school efficacy and to sharpen the school's goal of becoming a school of choice within the local community.
- Continue to strengthen the School Board through training to further raise their profile within the school.

Learning environment

Underpinned by genuine care and in the best interests of students, school processes and approaches proactively establish the conditions for students to engage in a caring, inclusive and responsive learning environment.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Culturally responsive leadership training has been embraced by the principal and the school has begun a strengths based audit of school practices against the Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework to grow cultural awareness and a focus on culturally inclusive learning across the school.
- A whole-school approach to the explicit teaching of expected behaviours is progressing and being supported at assemblies and by distributing positive behaviour tokens to reinforce targeted behaviours. There is a whole-school commitment to use common restorative language to support positive behaviour.
- The learning support coordinator, trained through the SSEN: D internship, delivers professional learning on Autism Spectrum Disorder and supports teachers to develop documented plans, differentiate instruction for at risk students and supports student transitions and the development of educational resources.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Continue to embed the restorative and positive behaviour approach, using data to measure impact.
- Review the students at educational risk policy to incorporate a multi-tiered system of supports to proactively use data to maximise student achievement and support student social, emotional, and behavioural needs.
- Explore ways to grow an authentic, valued and strong student voice that contributes to decision making.

Leadership

A shared vision and an unwavering focus on empowering and supporting staff with clear directions and expectations has been established by the leadership team. A culture of trust, respect and collaboration has united the school community through a targeted plan for improvement.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Leadership is cohesive, visible, and works collaboratively to ensure positive relationships are forged with staff, students and the wider community.
- Together with PLCs, the SIT have been key in embedding consistent, evidence-based teaching practices and shared learning beliefs across all year levels. The SIT and executive team collaborate to ensure the school's strategic direction is clear and maintained.
- Operational plans are collaboratively developed as part of a distributed leadership approach, ensuring alignment of the Western Australian Curriculum (WAC) implementation with whole-school programs. These plans are informed by targeted data analysis and staff feedback collected through surveys.
- Instructional coaches and 'champion' staff lead in data analysis, digital technologies, Talk for Writing, and DIBELS[4] implementation. A schedule for duties other than teaching, provides release time for all leadership roles. Future planned engagement with the Future Leaders Framework will further support aspirant leaders.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Develop and document an agreed change management model with staff and the School Board to transparently implement identified areas for school improvement.
- Progress consultation with staff and the community to develop a new business plan that strategically and transparently communicate school improvement targets and strategies.

Use of resources

Planning, management and monitoring processes for the use of resources are aligned to school operations. There is a clear intent to ensure resources are deployed to optimise the conditions for student success.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Resourcing processes and decisions ensure effective support for student achievement. The Finance Committee and School Board provide oversight of decisions which are directly aligned and linked to the key priorities and strategic goals of endorsed school planning.
- Targeted initiative funding is flexibly allocated to support diverse student needs, providing sports equipment, Zones of Regulation resources, sensory toolboxes and wobble stools to assist with managing behaviour, transitions, and students with limited English or imputed disabilities.
- Distributed leadership is supported through targeted salary pool funding for instructional coaching, the learning support coordinator and curriculum leadership. Strategic timetabling solutions, such as the 'Table Talk' initiative, ensure time within the school day for middle leadership meetings.

Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Document strategies to address the impact of declining enrolments and changing workforce characteristics through the development of a comprehensive workforce plan.

Teaching quality

Staff have a high level of personal care, commitment and professional knowledge and they are collectively and collaboratively focused on continually improving the quality of teaching instruction across the school.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Shared beliefs about teaching and learning are supported by whole-school evidence-based programs, including Top Ten Maths, Talk for Writing, InitiaLit (Pre-Primary to Year 2) and Sound Waves Synthetic Spelling (Years 3 to 6). This connected practice is being driven by collaborative planning, moderation, and PLC data analysis.
- The LEARN[5] lesson delivery model is being supported through the consistent integration of daily review practice in every classroom, supported by instructional coaches.
- PLCs provide teachers with a forum to implement strategic whole-school initiatives as aligned with operational and business plan targets. In addition, they support collaborative planning structures, consistent curriculum delivery, instruction, assessment practices and differentiation of learning for students. This has driven a shift in staff efficacy to collaborate with colleagues to ensure consistent planning and assessment.
- Teachers differentiate their daily reviews to provide for students with lower achievement and those who require extension. MiniLit and MacqLit support Tier 2 student interventions which are delivered by a trained education assistant who tracks student data to inform ongoing teacher planning.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Embed the LEARN model through high-impact, whole-school instruction aligned with the Department's Teaching for Impact, while strengthening the PLC model to support connected practice across learning phases.
- Celebrate successful implementation of school improvement strategies and initiatives more broadly with the school community to emphasise a relentless focus and commitment to high expectations and low variance connected practice in every classroom.

Student achievement and progress

Whole-school approaches to the delivery of curriculum are supported by the collection and use of data to inform student performance and progress.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- A whole-school assessment schedule, developed in consultation with the SIT, aligned with the business plan targets, guides PLC agendas and connected practice across the school regarding assessment.
- Fine grained assessments are utilised by teachers to assess student progress and inform planning. These include: cumulative reviews, stop and check, pre and post-tests (Top Ten Maths) Sound Waves content reviews, DIBELS, cold and hot tasks (Talk For Writing).
- The Elastik data platform supports a disciplined dialogue about data to identify strengths, weaknesses, and recommendations for improvement. Professional learning for staff on use of the SAIS[6] and NAPLAN[7] dashboard has built staff data literacy and capacity to understand their teaching impact.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Consider auditing numeracy programs to ensure connection across all year levels, and alignment to the WAC, to address the downward trend in numeracy performance in Years 3 and 5.
- Improve moderation processes and opportunities to ensure judgements by teachers about student achievement and progress align grade allocation to achievement standards.

Reviewers	
Steven Dickson **Director, Public School Review**	Cameron Adams **Principal, Samson 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 2027.

Steven Watson
Deputy Director General, Schools

References

1 School of Special Educational Needs: Disability
2 School of Special Educational Needs: Behaviour and Engagement
3 School of Special Educational Needs: Medical and Mental Health
4 Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills
5 Learning intentions, Engage, Activate learning, Review and Next stage
6 Student Achievement Information System
7 National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy