



Department of
Education

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Public education
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Nulsen Primary School

Public School Review

November 2018



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

Established in 1972, Nulsen Primary School is located within the town of Esperance, in the Goldfields Education Region. The school has cultivated strong ties to the community, establishing partnerships with local business and other organisations to support teaching and learning. This includes the recent Herb Planting Day, organised as part of the school's ongoing garden project, and the Nulsen in November community fete.

With an Index of Community and Socio-Educational Advantage rating of 860, the school currently enrolls 190 students from Kindergarten to Year 6. Approximately 40 per cent of the student population is Aboriginal, receiving support from an Aboriginal education coordinator and Aboriginal and Islander education officers.

School self-assessment validation

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

The following aspects are confirmed:

- There is alignment between evidence of school performance, observations and judgements about performance.
- The planning intentions described in the self-assessment submission were elaborated on during the school-based validation phase.
- Staff reported benefits from being involved in the school review process.
- Contextual factors impacting on the conditions for student success were explained during the validation process.
- A wide scope of credible evidence was selected for observation and analysis.

The following recommendation is made:

- A statement relating to the impact and/or outcome derived from evidence analysis will add value to the school's judgement about performance.

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Relationships and partnerships	
<p>A deep moral purpose underpins the significant efforts being made to make the school a positive place for students, parents, community and staff. A diverse range of intra-agency alignments, together with community partnerships, adds to the layers of support students receive.</p>	
Effectiveness	<p>The review team validates the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The chaplain has built parent capacity through the program Regenerate, providing avenues for parent engagement and community advocacy. • A mentoring program with high school students and community members to assist with literacy and numeracy, has had a positive impact. • Endeavours to get young mothers and small children into school ahead of Kindergarten through the KindiLink program have been successful. • The kitchen garden is a proven success impacting positively on attendance, nutrition and fostering an interest in herb and organic vegetable gardening. • The Clontarf Foundation and Little Yorgas have enhanced Aboriginal students' engagement, self-esteem and life skills. • Survey data confirms strong relationships both within the school and between the school and the community.
Improvements	<p>The review team validates the following action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advance the School Council's understanding and engagement of the cyclic review process.

Learning environment	
<p>The school is described as inviting and inclusive. This sentiment was endorsed by parents and community representatives and the survey data presented in the school submission.</p>	
Effectiveness	<p>The review team validates the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While attendance rates are below expected, a reduction in 'moderate' and 'severe' categories is encouraging. • Physical aggression is attributed to a minority of students with an overall reduction in suspensions indicating behaviour management strategies are gaining traction. • The <i>Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework</i> is embedded across all learning and reflected on regularly to inform all aspects of school planning. • Staff are perceived as caring, and are supported to seek innovative ways to maintain the positive attitudes students they have for their school. • Case conferences are well co-ordinated to ensure full value can be achieved from working with a variety of agencies.
Improvements	<p>The review team validates the following action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to explore support options for students with special needs.

Leadership

Effective leadership processes, in combination with a unifying vision for high expectations and a supportive learning environment, place the school in a strong position to meet the demands of 21st century teaching and learning.

Effectiveness	<p>The review team validates the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The leadership team places great importance on the role of parents and community engagement in shaping plans for school improvement.• The cluster leadership model provides an ideal opportunity for staff to be involved in leadership decision making.• School leaders have prepared and actioned processes for staff development.• Embedding a whole-school culture of cyclic review has been a leadership priority.• There is clarity of leadership roles and responsibilities, which delivers both cohesion and professional accountability.
Improvements	<p>The review team validates the following action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work with School Council members to strengthen their capacity to contribute to discussions about school direction and priorities.

Use of resources

The effective deployment of staff into key roles that utilise their specialised skills and interests has provided leadership and operational benefits for the school. Comprehensive resource replacement schedules, leasing agreements and budgeting for professional development are clear, well planned and strategic.

Effectiveness	<p>The review team validates the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recruitment processes have resulted in appointments of staff who are deeply invested in the vision of the school.• Workforce planning is detailed, strategic and future orientated.• Declining student numbers, leave, succession planning and gender balance feature as part of long-term workforce planning process.• Resources are drawn from the community to augment the work of staff.• Recognising language deficits in the early years, has led to the school identifying and harnessing the expertise of specialist personnel.• Ancillary staff such as the chaplain and an organic food growing expert add layers of value to the learning program.
Improvements	<p>The review team validates the following action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Investigate strategies to meet the challenge of the limited access to technology for some students at home.

Teaching quality

The school reflects deeply on student performance data and carefully plots strategies in response to trends and findings. Maintaining a focus on staff health and wellbeing is seen as a way of optimising the continuity of teaching and learning.

Effectiveness	<p>The review team validates the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clusters have collaborative time to review data, share ideas and develop targeted plans. Cluster plans, developed for each term, articulate the links between school plans and operational plans. While challenges exist, staff are optimistic and adaptive, believing they are making a difference in the lives of their students. The school's Curriculum and Assessment Policy provides staff with a 'blueprint' for all aspects of their work including; assessment guidelines, the reporting cycle and reporting to parents.
Improvements	<p>The review team validates the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embed moderation processes that utilise Brightpaths. Utilise the SAIS¹ dashboard to analyse and moderate teacher reporting judgements.

Student achievement and progress

Trends in student achievement and progress have been positive in recent years. With a downturn in some areas of assessment in 2018, the school has commenced an investigation with specific lines of enquiry.

Effectiveness	<p>The review team validates the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data indicates that children entering school below the expected standard for their age in speech are benefiting from the intervention strategy developed to meet this need identified through Kindergarten screening. One-on-one intervention with a trained education assistant in collaboration with a speech pathologist is effective. Staff skills in interrogating data and improving knowledge of SAIS tools are being developed. The NAPLAN² 'trivia' questions approach is an effective way of generating informed staff discussions about how to maximise the potential of student achievement information. There is a whole-school focus on student attendance as a significant factor in student achievement.
Improvements	<p>The review team validates the following action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen moderation processes in the early years.

Reviewers

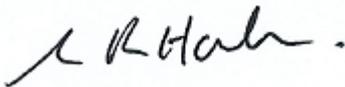
ROD LOWTHER
Director, Public School Review

BARRY FRANCE
Principal, Rostrata Primary School
Peer Reviewer

Endorsement

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

Your next school review is scheduled for 2021.



LINDSAY HALE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, PUBLIC SCHOOLS

References

- 1 Student Achievement Information System
- 2 National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy