



Department of
Education

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Public education
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Rivergums Primary School

Public School Review

August 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:

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

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

Context

Rivergums Primary School is an Independent Public School located in Baldivis, approximately 47 kilometres south of Perth in the South Metropolitan Education Region. It has an Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage rating of 994 (decile 5).

In response to population growth in the area, the school opened in 2016 with an enrolment-base of 359 students. Numbers have continued to increase and there are currently 641 students enrolled from Kindergarten to Year 6. It is expected that this growth trajectory will continue for several more years.

Rivergums Primary School has state-of-the-art facilities including an administration block, library, covered assembly area, canteen, specialist music and art rooms, mainstream classrooms, an inclusive education classroom and extensive play areas, including an early years nature play area.

The School Board and the Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) were both formed during 2016 and they actively support the strategic direction of the school. Notably, several members of the foundation steering committee who helped forge the school's ethos whilst it was being constructed, remain actively engaged in either the School Board or the P&C.

School self-assessment validation

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

The following aspects are confirmed:

- Underpinned by the School Improvement and Accountability Framework, regular self-assessment processes that are aligned to a continuous improvement agenda, are ably led by the school's leadership team.
- The school presented a thorough analysis of their current circumstances, indicating excellent data literacy and a deep knowledge of school performance.
- There was whole-staff collaboration and engagement in the analysis of data which informed the school's self-assessment.
- There was clear alignment between the performance evidence, judgements about priorities for improvement and strategies to be used.
- The planned intentions identified in the Electronic School Assessment Tool were elaborated upon during the validation visit.
- A variety of staff and parents engaged actively in the self-assessment process. The insights they provided enhanced the validation visit.

The following recommendation is made:

- Be discerning when considering what to include as evidence, annotating selected documents to direct reviewers to the relevance of the information uploaded.

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| Relationships and partnerships | |
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| A strong sense of community has been established quickly through a culture of mutual respect, open communication and a shared commitment to catering for individual needs of students. | |
| Effectiveness | <p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Principal is highly visible, very approachable and has a clear presence in the school. This sets the tone for a positive school ethos. • The school is proactive in connecting parents and students to essential services such as speech and occupational therapy for early intervention. • A wide variety of communication tools, including ClassDojo, Connect, the school's Facebook page and newsletter, offer excellent channels for fostering quality connections between the school and the community. • The school has forged a mutually beneficial working relationship with Baldivis Secondary College. • The School Board is well-trained, well-informed and eager to be strategic when selecting community representatives who will add value to the strategic directions of the school. • The P&C is valued highly and deserves to be proud of its achievements, especially with regards to the establishment of an on-site canteen. |
| Improvements | <p>The review team support the following action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage the P&C to align their fundraising targets to the strategic direction of the school so that their impact is more visible to all parents. |

| Learning environment | |
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| Behaviour is well-managed through effective processes and an agile approach to resourcing. The conditions are in place that ensure a safe, orderly and inclusive learning environment. | |
| Effectiveness | <p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a KidsMatter school, the genuine commitment to the philosophy that 'every face has a place', results in parents reporting that each child is known personally. • Comprehensive SAER¹ support processes that make a positive difference are premised on shared understanding, language and practice. • There is a clear sense of collective efficacy in the use of the RTI² model. Aply led by an intervention teacher, education assistants and teachers are skilled to address any persistent misconceptions students may demonstrate. • A detailed positive behaviour policy, incorporating PBS³ values and good standing, is appreciated by parents and embraced by students and staff. |
| Improvements | <p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Align the school's ABE⁴ descriptors to PBS expectations for improved data management purposes. • Transition from KidsMatter to Be You by 2021. |

Leadership

Driven by a moral purpose of improving the outcomes for all students, the school's leadership team has forged a highly reflective and collegiate culture with a strong professional growth and development base. Opportunities to lead abound. Staff are simultaneously well-supported and held to account through annual reviews of assigned roles.

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| Effectiveness | <p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A transparent distributed leadership model has resulted in aspirants gaining substantive appointments in a competitive market. • The high expectations set are well-supported by professional learning, often in-house, for both teaching and support staff. • A comprehensive staff handbook and effective induction process work to ensure adherence to a shared vision as staff numbers grow. • A culture of leadership is equally evident amongst the active student councillors. They have a clear voice and engage in appropriate decision making for the ultimate benefit of the school. • There is a genuine commitment to reflect against the ACSF⁵ and implement strategies and processes in order to be culturally responsive. |
| Improvements | <p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish quality connections with the local Aboriginal community as the ethos of the ACSF becomes embedded in whole-school practices. • Formalise peer coaching processes for classroom observation and feedback by implementing the planned GROWTH⁶ coaching model. |

Use of resources

Resourcing is targeted to support essential personnel and programs. Strategic planning that supports students who attract additional funding is a key priority.

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| Effectiveness | <p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school is well-resourced as a result of strategic use of the establishment grant over a three-year period and judicious financial decision-making. • There is a clear and defensible link between the budget and school operational plans, with the MCS⁷ ensuring that cost centre managers are both financially aware and accountable for their expenditure. • Students requiring teaching and learning adjustments are supported by highly skilled and trained EASN⁸ who take considerable pride in the essential role they play in improving student outcomes. • The workforce plan considers both existing and future planning needs. |
| Improvements | <p>The review team support the following action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage the School Board and the P&C in the active promotion of the benefits of payment of voluntary contributions to improve student outcomes. |

Teaching quality

Collaborative by nature, a culture of robust professional debate is valued by the staff at Rivergums Primary School. Reflective practices are underpinned by shared beliefs about what constitutes effective teaching.

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| Effectiveness | <p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of explicit instruction, employing the gradual release model, is articulated in comprehensive documentation, especially in literacy and numeracy planning. This pedagogical approach is embraced by every teacher. • Evidence of quality in-house moderation processes, aligned to the SCSA⁹ judging standards, results in rich data sets that inform planning foci. • The data literacy of staff is strong. Transparent assessment requirements, such as providing students with detailed rubrics in advance, offer students the opportunity to achieve to their demonstrated capacity. • A considerable investment in technologies is evident in the detailed ICT¹⁰ plan; the building of staff capacity to embed technologies in their practices; and the focus on technical coaching. |
| Improvements | <p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively engage staff with the newly established Karnup Network to enhance across-school partnerships, especially with respect to moderation. • Embed ICT capabilities in the curriculum by establishing a formalised whole-school ICT scope and sequence. |

Student achievement and progress

An explicit and targeted approach to early intervention is premised on a strong belief that a concerted effort in the beginning will lay the foundations for future success.

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| Effectiveness | <p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robust analysis of data, through disciplined dialogue, builds a strong understanding of student performance. • An effective and targeted case management approach is implemented as required in response to a review of a variety of student performance data. • Key staff, charged with the responsibility to lead targeted intervention, are discerning about chosen programs and the data gained from them. They interrogate and challenge choices made to best meet identified student needs. • Aspirational targets are regularly reflected upon, employing a robust assess, plan, act, review cycle. |
| Improvements | <p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formalise processes and strategies to extend more capable students through the planned action research project. • Continue to seek quality data that best informs teacher judgements and future actions for improved student outcomes. |

Reviewers

Kath Ward
Director, Public School Review

Julie Woodhouse
Principal, Butler 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 Students at educational risk
- 2 Response to Intervention
- 3 Positive Behaviour Support
- 4 Attitude, behaviour and effort
- 5 Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework
- 6 Goals, reality, options, will, tactics, habits
- 7 Manager Corporate Services
- 8 Education Assistant Special Needs
- 9 School Curriculum and Standards Authority
- 10 Information and communications technology