



Department of
Education

Shaping the future

Spearwood Primary School

Public School Review

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 resource in alternative formats for people with accessibility needs, please contact PublicSchoolAccountability.PublicSchoolReview@education.wa.edu.au

Context

Opened in 1914, Spearwood Primary School is located in the South Metropolitan Education Region, approximately 25 kilometres south-west of the Perth central business district.

The school became an Independent Public School in 2017. It has an Index of Community Socio Educational Advantage of 970 (decile 7). Currently, 130 students are enrolled at the school from Kindergarten to Year 6.

Spearwood Primary School has an active School Board, and the Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) supports the school with both resources and services.

The first Public School Review of Spearwood Primary School was conducted in Term 4, 2020. This 2023 Public School Review report provides a current point of reference for the next cycle of school improvement.

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:

- Members of the leadership team used established self-assessment, planning and reflection processes to prepare for the Public School Review.
- The Electronic School Assessment Tool (ESAT) submission demonstrated that the 2020 Public School Review recommendations had been considered and addressed.
- The School Board understands and accepts the value of self-assessment and how it links to the review process.
- Staff and School Board members contributed to the ESAT submission using collaborative learning strategies. This approach promoted interaction, engagement and a shared responsibility for the Public School Review process.
- The evidence submitted through the ESAT and the analysis of the impact was clear and concise.

The following recommendations are made:

- In future ESAT submissions, include clearly defined planned actions with direct alignment to evidence-based analysis.
- Ensure the ESAT entries clearly articulate the progress being made in each domain.

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Relationships and partnerships

Authentic relationships between staff, students, families, agencies and local businesses have been built on trust and mutual respect. This has been a contributing factor to the establishment of unanimity of purpose and a commitment to high standards of teaching and learning.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The School Board operate within the Terms of Reference and an agreed Code of Conduct. Members demonstrate a sound understanding of their governance responsibilities.
- The P&C strengthen family engagement with the school and contribute resources that enhance learning programs and events.
- A wide range of communication platforms including Connect notices, newsletters, SMS¹, the Consent2Go app and school's website cater for a wider audience.
- The school has established and maintained partnerships with a range of community groups, local businesses and service organisations, such as the City of Cockburn, Spearwood Returned Services League and the Spearwood Uniting Church. Partnerships enhance the image and reputation of the school and support student learning and wellbeing.
- Strong professional relationships based on mutual respect are evident between staff, students and families in supporting cultural diversity within the school community.

Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Continue to identify and prioritise inclusive practices to engage all families in the school community.

Learning environment

The school provides a safe, caring and inclusive environment in a culturally diverse community. The voice of families and students are accounted for in supporting academic, social and emotional learning opportunities.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The Cultural Committee has created a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). The RAP has contributed positively to relationships, respect and learning opportunities within the classroom and school community.
- The school chaplain plays a crucial role in supporting the wellbeing of staff, families from diverse backgrounds and the wider Spearwood community. Harmony Day is an important annual event.
- Behaviour management procedures are implemented consistently, focusing on restorative practice, emphasising empathy, compassion and relationship building.
- Policies and practices are in place to support students at educational risk. The On-entry Assessment Program and other school-based assessment data form the basis for planning intervention with assistance from the learning support coordinator.
- The indoor and outdoor learning environments add value to student educational experiences. The prominence of artwork designed by the Aboriginal Islander education officer (AIEO) is significant in enhancing areas within the school.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Embed the recently implemented Six Kinds of Best Values program to complement existing behaviour management procedures.
- Complete the outdoor classroom project to support student learning and honour the contribution to the school of a highly respected former staff member.

Leadership

Organisational and management processes, designed and implemented by the Principal, are clearly defined and understood by staff and families contributing to public confidence in the direction of the school.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Commitment to the 2023-2025 Business Plan reflects the shared ownership of a school vision and values that guide the actions of staff and School Board. Planning is evidence-based and aligns with the needs of a diverse student population.
- The Principal values the empowerment of staff by ensuring skills and knowledge are supported through professional learning and regular classroom observations.
- The consultative approach to leading change management is enhanced through the effective cultivation of high levels of trust and respect between the Principal, staff and families and achieves understanding and acceptance for planned initiatives.
- Performance management, with a healthy balance of informal and formal engagement between the leadership and staff, is valued and contributes to school improvement.
- School leaders have created an environment where all staff have a strong commitment to cultural responsiveness, establishing collaborative, trusting and respectful working relationships with Aboriginal students and their families.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Formalise the literacy and numeracy leadership roles incorporating mentoring and professional learning.
- Further develop aspirants' understandings of leadership through individualised professional learning and engagement in the Western Australian Future Leaders Framework.

Use of resources

Decision making is collaborative and transparent in relation to how resources are deployed. Aligning the school's resources to business plan priorities and the evidenced needs of students underpins all decisions.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The Principal and manager corporate services (MCS) have a clear understanding of use and management of resources aligned to the Department's compliance requirements.
- An effective Finance Committee assists with financial oversight. The School Board is kept well-informed of financial management processes and spending priorities.
- The reserve replacement planning process provides a focus on student needs. Assets such as ICT² and computing equipment for the school's laboratory are adequately funded to replace items as required.
- Workforce planning prioritises the appointment and deployment of staff to meet the needs of the students and school as identified by the school business plan.
- Targeted initiative funding, complemented by the roles of the MCS, education assistants, speech pathologist, occupational therapist, AIEO and chaplain, supports differentiation, student wellbeing and the work of the Cultural Committee.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Maintain current approaches to workforce planning that utilises established teacher and education assistant pools and prioritises the reduction of leave liability.
- Continue to explore options that may include visiting teacher services, therapy assistance and access to programs from within the Department and from external agencies to support students at educational risk.

Teaching quality

Teaching is of a high quality throughout the school. Teachers are extremely competent, reflective and strive for excellence in their classroom practice.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Staff share common beliefs and practices about explicit instruction. Induction procedures and professional learning support newly appointed staff in their roles.
- A range of systemic and school data has been analysed well and forms the basis to plan for improvement in individual and group learning.
- Literacy programs including Sound Waves, Talk for Writing and Heggerty Phonemic Awareness (Heggerty) are aligned with the Western Australian Curriculum and embedded in the 2023-2025 Business Plan.
- Differentiation is a focus within the school with students at educational risk supported through individual education plans, Heggerty and the effective deployment of education assistants.
- Staff collaboration supports teachers in their planning, teaching, assessment and implementation of the agreed whole-school practices in literacy and numeracy.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Align planning for improvement and professional learning with the Department's Quality Teaching Strategy.
- Complete the diagrammatic representation reflecting effective lesson design and the school's approach to explicit instruction that can be promoted within the school and externally through various communication platforms.

Student achievement and progress

The school has the capacity to self-reflect on student achievement data and how this will influence planning, assessment, target setting and an ongoing professional dialogue.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Student achievement and progress is based on the school's belief in high care and high expectations with the implementation of evidence-based programs.
- NAPLAN³, On-entry and standardised assessments such as Progressive Achievement Tests, Brightpath, Fountas and Pinnell Literacy, and Oxford Maths program tests form part of a documented assessment schedule. This data is analysed by staff and forms the basis for business plan priorities and classroom decision making.
- In 2022, Spearwood Primary School was recognised as one of the top 50 Western Australian public schools in the relative performance in Year 3 English NAPLAN results.
- The reliability of teacher judgements is supported through processes including collaboration and moderation.
- Professional learning is provided to build staff capacity in analysing and interpreting data. Staff expertise is utilised to provide ongoing support to peers in analysing student performance information.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Progress the development of a clear shared understanding of the school's 'high care, high expectations' approach and the impact of this on student achievement and progress.
- Support this understanding through formal documentation and communicate widely to further strengthen the image and reputation of the school.

Reviewers

Ken Perris
Director, Public School Review

Amanda Robinson
Principal, Bindoon 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 to be scheduled for 2026. You will be formally notified in the 2 terms leading up to your school's scheduled review.



Melesha Sands
Deputy Director General, Schools

References

- 1 Short Messaging Service
- 2 Information and communications technology
- 3 National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy