



Department of
Education

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O'Connor Primary School

Public School Review

December 2020



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 its 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 three-year cycle, subsequent reviews are determined to occur on a one, three or five-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 school review report and determines when the next review will occur. The report is provided to the principal, the chair of the school council/board 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

together with the Funding Agreement for Schools.

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.



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Context

O'Connor Primary School is situated within the Goldfields Education Region in Kalgoorlie-Boulder, approximately 592 kilometres east of Perth. O'Connor Education Support Centre is co-located on the site.

Established in 1996, the school was named after Charles Yelverton (CY) O'Connor, the Chief Engineer for Western Australia from 1981 until 1902. In 2011, O'Connor Primary School became an Independent Public School.

Currently there are 705 students enrolled from Kindergarten to Year 6. The school has an Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage of 931 (decile 9).

Community support is demonstrated through the work of the School Board and the Parents and Citizens' Association.

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:

- A wide range of staff engaged in discussion during the validation visit including: leadership; community members; teachers, and allied professionals. Each added value to the school's Electronic School Assessment Tool submission.
- The leadership viewed the school self-assessment process as beneficial in clarifying the future improvement directions for the school.
- Staff are acknowledged for their professional commitment to the review process, demonstrated during the validation phase.
- Anecdotal information and observations were supported by strategic and operational plans.

The following recommendations are made:

- Continue to refine the quality of evidence selected to demonstrate school performance against each domain of the Standard.
- Explore further opportunities for whole-staff collaboration and engagement in the analysis of data to inform school self-assessment and improvement processes.

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Relationships and partnerships	
<p>A focus on positive relationships and community partnerships underpin an ethos of inclusion and collaboration. The school's work in maintaining relationships with staff and connections with families during COVID-19 was valued by both parents and staff.</p>	
Commendations	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graduate teachers voiced appreciation for the school in welcoming and supporting them during their transition into the school. • Networks with universities that promote a teacher preservice program are contributing to employment pathways into the school. • The school has forged a positive partnership with O'Connor Education Support Centre, with both schools working successfully to build an inclusive environment. • An agreement with Full Circle Therapies Inc is increasing students' and families' access to learning and wellbeing support. • Developing relationships with local indigenous community members is a school priority. A Parent Advisory Committee adds value to the school's development of cultural responsiveness. • The school's Play Parties initiative is increasing community connections and adding value to students' development prior to entering school.
Recommendations	<p>The review team support the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend School Board membership to be more representative of the whole school community. • Further explore the type of and opportunity for feedback, sought by staff.

Learning environment	
<p>The school has created a safe, inclusive and culturally responsive learning environment. Well-maintained gardens and playgrounds are contributing to a welcoming physical environment for staff, students and community members.</p>	
Commendations	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school has implemented MindUP to address and improve key health and wellbeing outcomes for students. • An identified set of agreed values (FAIR - Friendship, Achievement, Inclusion, Respect) are shared by staff, students and parents. • Students view the school as supportive and caring. Student voice is promoted through leadership opportunities and input into school events, assemblies and the organisation of daily fitness. • The school has engaged Aboriginal community members in the development of a recently signed Reconciliation Action Plan.
Recommendation	<p>The review team support the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to implement Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) with fidelity, including access to professional learning for PBS team members and maintaining the collection of behaviour data.

Leadership

A distributed leadership structure encompassing teaching and learning leaders, phase leaders and committee leaders is contributing to ongoing school improvement.

Commendations	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The school vision and business plan were developed collaboratively by staff, with priorities aligned to the Department's strategic directions.• Motivated teaching and learning leaders are supporting teachers to work collaboratively and reflect on practice to improve teaching capability.• The leadership of change is evident in the gradual release model, which was employed in the development of teachers' expertise and confidence in the delivery of Letters and Sounds.• Teachers demonstrated an understanding of the link between the school business plan, operational plans and classroom plans.• Professional learning is provided to staff in alignment with both staff interest and school initiatives, such as explicit teaching and Talk for Writing.
Recommendations	<p>The review team support the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue to develop leadership and ensure that succession planning supports the sustainability of the distributed leadership structure.• Consolidate instructional leadership strategies, including the implementation of evidence-based whole-school processes.

Use of resources

The school is effectively allocating resources to fund targeted support programs and provide additional support for identified students to improve learning and wellbeing outcomes.

Commendations	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sound financial planning and budget monitoring is evident, ensuring the sustainable allocation of physical and human resources to meet student and school needs.• Workforce planning is a key focus, with a range of strategies implemented to optimise the attraction and retention of staff.• Distributed leadership has been prioritised through the resourcing and support of a range of leadership roles across the school.
Recommendation	<p>The review team support the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue to monitor enrolment numbers to ensure workforce sustainability and the allocation of sufficient resources to meet the needs of students.

Teaching quality

A strong commitment to implementing whole-school approaches for literacy and numeracy is evident. Teacher development is prioritised through mentoring, collaboration and reflection.

Commendations	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school is in the early stages of implementing an explicit teaching model. A core group of teachers trained in Teach Well, is strengthening a shared understanding of explicit teaching in the school. Talk for Writing and Letters and Sounds have been implemented across the school, with high levels of staff engagement. The school has a range of strategies and interventions in place to cater for all students' learning. They include: differentiation; occupational therapy; speech therapy; Individual Education Plans; MiniLit; and additional education assistant support. Teacher collaboration is facilitated through astute timetabling. This is contributing to the development of consistent practices in literacy and numeracy.
Recommendation	<p>The review team support the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consolidate consistent teaching practices through sustainable professional learning including the exploration of a video bank to identify key strategies for implementation.

Student achievement and progress

The school has developed an assessment schedule and collects a range of system and school-based data, which staff analyse to guide classroom planning.

Commendations	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback from staff indicates a focus on moderation has improved the accuracy of teacher judgements and grade alignment. Year 3 to Year 5 stable cohort data (2017-2019) demonstrated high achievement and progress in NAPLAN¹ mathematics. On-entry Assessment Program data are reviewed within year level teams. Leaders and teachers identify trends, strengths, and target groups for interventions, such as speech therapy/occupational therapy.
Recommendations	<p>The review team support the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen diagnostic assessment and the identification of targets for student improvement in literacy and numeracy. Strengthen processes for tracking student progress and achievement. Increase staff data literacy and capacity to analyse fine grained data, identify student needs, plan for teaching and monitor student progress.



Reviewers

Kim McCollum
Director, Public School Review

Lee Musumeci
Principal, Challis Community 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 scheduled for Term 4, 2023.



Stephen Baxter
Deputy Director General, Schools

References

- 1 National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy
- 7 PUBLIC SCHOOL REVIEW | REPORT

