



Department of  
Education

**Shaping the future**

# Hilton 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 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 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 in student achievement and progress.

The Statement is between; the Department of Education, 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, as well as the Professional Performance Review of the Principal.

## 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](mailto:PublicSchoolAccountability.PublicSchoolReview@education.wa.edu.au)

## Context

Hilton Primary School opened in 1950 and is located in the City of Fremantle, 25 kilometres south-west of the Perth central business district, within the South Metropolitan Education Region.

There are 250 students currently enrolled from Kindergarten to Year 6. Hilton Primary School gained Independent Public School status in 2015. The school has an Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage of 1034 (decile 3).

The school has a diverse school community, which includes Noongar families as well as those with French, German and other language backgrounds. It is committed to the values of Community, Inclusivity, Respect, Creativity and Sustainability.

Community involvement is encouraged by the school, which is supported by a School Board and an active Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C).

## School self-assessment validation

The Principal submitted a transparent school self-assessment, highlighting an overview of the school operations and improvement journey.

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

- The Standard was used to guide self-assessment processes in preparation for the Public School Review.
- A focus on collaborative processes underpinned the school self-assessment.
- The school community, students and staff were invited to engage in self-assessment discussions and interviews during the validation visit.
- Engagement with staff, students and community during the validation visit was welcoming, open and transparent.

The following recommendations are made:

- Finalise and publish the strategic plan and operational plans, to enable the school to progress on its improvement journey.
- Engage all staff and stakeholders in regular and collaborative self-assessment processes aligned to school planning.
- Continue to utilise the Electronic School Assessment Tool to engage in and embed ongoing cycles of self-assessment across all domains.
- Explicit attention should be given to the quality of evidence used to describe the essential indicators of performance, as outlined in the Standard.
- Embed the language of reflection across all aspects of the school's ongoing self-assessment processes.
- Build a school-wide culture of self-assessment through the use of evidence to determine levels of performance and areas for targeted improvement.

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### Relationships and partnerships

Relationships between some staff and school leaders are neither cohesive nor conducive to leading a culture of school improvement and change. Pockets of effective and informal collaboration are evident across the school, but there is a need for development of positive relationships to be built and fostered across all phases.

### Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Respectful partnerships with families are supported through communication platforms, class meetings, case management processes and a Class Representative system.
- The School Board is engaged in the development of the school's strategic direction and supports the future direction of the school. Members have a sound understanding of their governance role and responsibilities.
- The P&C supports and leads initiatives across the school, and parents indicated they value school community events.

### Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- The staff culture needs development. Unify the staff through identifying a shared moral purpose, embedding explicit collaborative practices and norms. A shared commitment to drive change and adhere to Department expectations is essential to achieve success.
- Continue to engage families, community agencies, the Cockburn-Fremantle Network of schools and Statewide Services to strengthen teaching and learning partnerships.
- Establish and embed induction processes for new staff and families.
- Openly share National School Opinion Survey results and school actions in response to feedback with all stakeholders. Collaboratively reflect on ways to drive school improvement.
- Analyse and act on exit feedback in order to strategically address the reasons why student numbers in upper primary are declining.

### Learning environment

The outdoor environment is valued and viewed as an extension of the classroom. Opportunities to engage in nature pedagogy within the rich physical environment exist.

### Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Sustainable 'outside classrooms' are valued. Staff explore sustainable thinking as evident in STEAM<sup>1</sup> and nature pedagogy.
- The recent appointment of a deputy principal and learning support coordinator are viewed as critical supports to implement and embed key student support structures.

### Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Establish and embed as a priority, consistent behaviour management practices through the development of clearly articulated policies and procedures.
- Establish and embed consistent processes and procedures for students at educational risk.
- Strategically link to Statewide Services (SSEN: D<sup>2</sup>, SSEN: S<sup>3</sup> and SSEN: BE<sup>4</sup>) to support the implementation and management of effective school-wide practice.
- Further develop the ECE<sup>5</sup> teaching philosophy. Review the balance between play-based learning and explicit teaching. Ensure nature pedagogy through extended breaks enables authentic, intentional teaching.
- Formalise the Reconciliation Action Plan and engage all staff in the review aligned to the Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework.
- Explore opportunities to strategically address the wellbeing needs of staff and students.

## Leadership

The school motto, 'A great place to learn and grow' is valued by some within the school community. Whilst it is acknowledged that there has been a high turnover of leadership in recent years, there is a critical need for leadership stability, direction and implementation of structures to support school improvement.

### Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Staff and community expressed a strong desire for clear strategic directions and consistent whole-school processes owned by all, reflective of the school vision and the needs of the diverse community.
- The community have a shared appetite for school improvement despite the recognition of leadership turnover.
- Respectful and genuine approaches that drive culturally responsive practices are evident.

### Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Lead change and school improvement that will drive conditions for learning to occur. Drive transparent and collaborative processes and ensure a shared purpose and direction to improve outcomes is articulated.
- Capitalise on staff expertise through establishing explicit role clarity, leadership development and support.
- Finalise, socialise and embed the strategic plan: Our Plan for Growth, prioritising stakeholder engagement in the process.
- Capitalise on staff expertise through the establishment of Kindergarten to Year 6 curriculum teams.
- Collaboratively develop Kindergarten to Year 6 operational plans, with explicit targets, milestones and resourcing links to support consistency in programs and pedagogy.
- Provide feedback to staff. Embed performance management and accountability processes to guide consistency and growth.

## Use of resources

There is an understanding of the need to ensure funding decisions are prioritised in the best interests of students, with clear links to school strategic planning.

### Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Targeted recruitment processes have attracted new staff to leadership, class and specialist teaching and support roles.
- There is a commitment to the provision and availability of technologies, with support for staff prioritised.
- Allied professionals are viewed as a valued resource and support for staff and students.
- The school has been successful in grant applications that aim to enhance the learning environment.

### Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Drive transparent decision making through the Finance Committee and ensure there are clear and explicit links to school planning.
- Allocate resourcing to facilitate distributed leadership. Embed collaborative structures to drive instructional leadership and foster consistent phase of learning team engagement.
- Conduct an audit of programs and subscriptions and ensure alignment between budgets and planning.
- Articulate the decision making behind the allocation of support staff in order to meet the behaviour and learning needs of students. Make explicit the funding sources in line with the student characteristics funding allocation.
- Develop a current workforce plan. Identify and address strategies and potential workforce gaps.

## Teaching quality

The school acknowledges the critical importance of consistent whole-school approaches in order to support student achievement. Developing a shared understanding of pedagogical approaches has been identified as an ongoing area for development.

### Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The Kindergarten to Pre-primary team collaborate to explore explicit teaching and play-based learning through nature pedagogy.
- Consistency in Kindergarten to Pre-primary is evidenced through the shared implementation of Letters and Sounds, and literacy and numeracy blocks. This is supported through collaboration and moderation of planning and assessment.
- The Arts program is valued, with displays of student talent evident.

### Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Work collaboratively to develop and embed Kindergarten to Year 6 operational plans that link explicitly to the Western Australian Curriculum.
- Embed agreed practice through the consistent implementation of evidence-based programs. Enhance commitment through collaboration and instructional coaching.
- Support teachers to know every child's progress and achievement. Implement targeted, evidence-based interventions to differentiate learning as needed.
- Establish curriculum teams for English, mathematics, science and HASS<sup>6</sup>, each with representation from across the school. Explicitly connect whole-school plans to phases of learning.
- Increase data literacy through consistent and meaningful data collection. Establish structures and supports to drive planning, data-informed practice, assessment and reporting.
- Embrace network opportunities for professional learning and moderation.

## Student achievement and progress

The effective use of data to track student progress and inform class and whole-school decision making has been acknowledged by the school as an area requiring significant development.

### Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- It is acknowledged that the Public School Review process brought clarity and opportunity to understand factors that influence student outcomes.
- On-entry Assessment Program data are used to support intervention approaches.
- An outdated 2019 data collection cycle is informing staff on assessment and plans for improvement.
- Some teachers are embracing the use of Brightpath as a moderation tool.

### Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Address the declining levels of academic achievement as evidenced in 2019 Year 3 NAPLAN<sup>7</sup> data.
- Review and update the 2019 assessment schedule to guide and facilitate greater data literacy. Ensure purpose and targets are explicit.
- Implement evidence-based intervention, such as MiniLit.
- Provide opportunities for academic extension across the school.
- Manage the collection, tracking and storage of assessment data to facilitate ease of access and handover processes.

## Reviewers

Rebecca Bope  
**Director, Public School Review**

Natalie Tarr  
**Principal, Nollamara 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.

The next Public School Review, inclusive of all domains, will be scheduled for Term 3, 2022.



Melesha Sands  
**Deputy Director General, Schools**

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## References

- 1 Science, technology, engineering, the arts and mathematics
- 2 School of Special Educational Needs: Disability
- 3 School of Special Educational Needs: Sensory
- 4 School of Special Educational Needs: Behaviour and Engagement
- 5 Early Childhood Education
- 6 Humanities and Social Sciences
- 7 National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy