



Department of
Education

Shaping the future

Port Hedland School of the Air

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 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, 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

Context

Established in 1964, Port Hedland School of the Air is situated in the Pilbara Education Region approximately 1600 kilometres north of Perth.

The school has an Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage of 962 (decile 7).

Currently there are **27** students enrolled from Kindergarten to Year 6.

Port Hedland School of the Air provides educational services to children living in remote and isolated locations in the Pilbara region of Western Australia and covers around 560 000 square kilometres.

School self-assessment validation

The principal submitted a school self-assessment outlining the school's operations.

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

- A representation of staff, students and parents engaged in discussions with the review team, contributing authentic reflections in support of the school. Their enthusiastic contribution added value and clarity to the school's submission.
- Staff input into school self-assessment processes has been facilitated through informal and formal opportunities for discussion on student achievement data and evidence.
- In preparation for the public school review, the Principal shared information about the review and engaged staff in actively making a contribution to the Electronic School Assessment tool (ESAT). All staff worked collaboratively with general agreement resulting from discussions and analysis of the evidence selected.
- An extensive tour of the school, with opportunities to speak with the co-located staff from education and service providers, significantly enriched the validation process providing a greater understanding of the evidence presented in the ESAT and an insight into their unique and distinct context.
- The principal valued the school review process as an opportunity to reflect on school performance and identify areas for celebration and improvement.

The following recommendations are made:

- Ensure in future ESAT submissions the evidence validates the judgements made with these two questions guiding selection: Why do you think this piece of evidence supports your judgement? Why do you think this evidence meets the Standard?
- Carefully consider the choice of evidence and analysis in each domain to ensure it accurately describes the impact on student outcomes.
- In collaboration with staff and as part of the school's regular review process, consider reviewing each of the ESAT domains using the Standard and domain foci.
- Build a culture of reflection and continuous improvement using the ESAT to record judgements and observations as part of the ongoing school self-assessment cycle.

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Relationships and partnerships

The school's deliberate and nuanced approach in the formation of sustainable relationships and partnerships that value add to the educational program provided is acknowledged. This is developing globally aware and responsive citizens to the world beyond their current environment.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Co-located on the PHOSTA site, the partnerships between the school and BHP Pilbara Education, RFDS, SSEN:B and inclusion in Town of Port Hedland events provides benefits for staff and students.
- Involvement with the WA Museum photographic exhibition provided a forum for students to showcase their unique way of life to a wide audience.
- Communication is personalised and embedded in the operations of the school. This includes a morning muster where the principal connects on line with students, home tutors and staff, emails, online newsletter and Seesaw.
- Informal weekly team meetings, for staff to work collaboratively and plan for teaching and learning, foster and build positive professional relationships and ensure all staff are on the same page.
- The school welcomes the feedback they receive from families and staff through emails or surveys and respond in a timely and thoughtful manner. The data collected is used to guide future planning for school improvement. Families and staff reported high levels of satisfaction and trust in the school.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Continue with, and progress attention to, re-establishing a functioning School Council. Ensure mandatory criminal screening clearances are completed by parent representatives, and include the provision of training for all members.

Learning environment

Central to the school's learning environment is a student-centred approach to high levels of individualised care. The 'Schoolrooms' and online learning environment is inclusive and tailored for each student to gain optimal learning experiences and to build a sense of belonging to the classroom community.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Home tutors have participated in Cultural Awareness professional learning. Capitalising on the expertise of the onsite Aboriginal Language program coordinator, the school is committed to developing a culturally responsive learning environment for students and families.
- The opportunity to deliver intervention, early learning programs and extension for students is maximised through the co-located educational providers. This includes the BHP early learning programme (0-3) and PEAC in the provision of PL for staff on differentiating the curriculum for gifted students.
- A designated Support Teacher Learning (STL) works collaboratively with the staff and tutors to identify students at educational risk and plan to support learning and behavioural needs.
- Close consideration is given to optimising the physical learning environment. Physical spaces are well-resourced with high level ICT connectivity to create the conditions for children to interact and learn within their unique context.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Continue to develop cultural awareness by embedding Aboriginal perspectives across the curriculum and providing an ongoing focus on the ACSF to ensure teaching and learning practices are culturally responsive.
- Connect with allied health services to provide additional interventions such as speech therapy.

Leadership

The principal is committed to leading a school that contributes to the achievement of system priorities. Active involvement and support for the Pilbara and SOTA network schools and contribution to the Hedland Strategic Directions is ensuring school priorities and direction are aligned to those of the Department.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Staff taking on leadership positions are supported with the provision of professional learning and clarity around their roles and responsibilities.
- Teacher leaders provide valuable support for teachers in implementing the whole-school programs within the school and the Pilbara network schools.
- Complying with the Performance Management template, the school is embarking on a clear and transparent performance review process that supports teachers through feedback to reflect and build their teaching practice.
- The collaboratively developed 2023-2025 strategic plan provides direction for staff with consideration given to ensure the Strategic Plan reflects the strategic directions of the Department within the context of PHSOTA.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Aligned to the Strategic Plan, develop operational plans for the core learning areas and scope and sequence documents for literacy and numeracy. Include measurable targets and milestones, focused on improved individual student progress.

Use of resources

The principal and manager corporate services work collaboratively with staff to make certain financial and physical resources provide access to rich learning opportunities and experiences ensuring students are not disadvantaged by their geographic location.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Resourcing opportunities for the school community to come together during Muster Week provides high levels of support for students, tutors and staff whilst building wellbeing and a connected community.
- Expenditure and allocation of resources and funding are evidence based and drive initiatives that directly benefit quality teaching and the students. This includes provision of professional learning for the home tutors.
- Targeted initiatives, operational response and student characteristics funding are used strategically to provide support in teaching and learning programs, such as employment of the SLT to support SAER.
- Recognising the critical role technology plays in the provision of education for the students at PHSOTA, the school has prioritised funds to complete a significant technological infrastructure upgrade. This has provided staff, students and tutors with an up-to-date interface that is accessible and reliable for the delivery of on-line learning.
- Significant financial support is provided through a partnership and formal agreement with BHP, providing funds to implement the Early Learning 0-3 year-old program.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Continue to develop the workforce plan. Identify and address strategies and potential workforce gaps including succession planning.

Teaching quality

Staff are acutely aware of the geographical isolation of the students and families attending PHSOTA and give a high priority on creating organised structures that successfully connect families to the school and to each other.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Teachers provide valuable support and professional learning for home tutors ensuring there is consistency in the instructional program and pedagogical approach. Additionally, home tutors are provided with written instructions for programs and lessons, including the Learning Activity and Learning Intentions, to guide them on the 'how and why' of the lessons.
- Camps, home visits and face-to-face interaction is building teachers' understanding of the circumstances and interests of each child supporting them in planning differentiated programs to meet the needs of their students
- Collaborative planning structures enable conversations between colleagues, opening opportunities for staff to work together and engage in professional practices and processes to improve student learning.
- Considered vital to the success of the learning program, regular feedback to both students and home tutors is provided through Seesaw posts and set unit work reports. This is supporting students to embrace all learning opportunities and gives ongoing guidance and development for home tutors in their delivery of the set work.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Progress the work already undertaken to engage with the Quality Teaching Strategy to formalise and strengthen a consistent, collaborative pedagogical approach that will create a reflective teaching culture delivering impactful, low variance, connected practice across all phases of learning.

Student achievement and progress

There is a genuine sense of collective responsibility and acknowledgement by staff of student achievement data. Analysis of data underpins the cycle of Plan, Act and Assess, guiding and directing air lessons and differentiation to support individual student needs.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The school has established routines, expectations and resourcing to ensure students and families find accessing education straightforward. This has significantly contributed to the high attendance rate and the subsequent positive impact this has had on student achievement and progress.
- The BHP Education partnership is integral to the 0-3 Year Early Learning Program. This, together with quality teaching instruction provided through online learning experiences, has resulted in enrolments in the program flourishing and On-Entry Assessment data validating the benefits to children's readiness for school.
- In 2022, aspirational targets of 80% of students in Years 3 and 5 achieving within the Band where the National Average is indicated, or above, in both Literacy and Numeracy, was achieved.
- The focus on the Kindergarten and 0-3 Year old programs is impacting positively on student outcomes with almost all children who sat the On-Entry Assessment scoring within the median range or above in Reading, Writing & Numeracy when compared to 'like schools'.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Establish a longitudinal data platform for the storage of system and school-based student data that tracks student achievement and progress. Ensure accessibility for all staff to inform their planning for student learning and reporting.

Reviewers

Maxine Augustson
Director, Public School Review

Gemma Larham
Principal, Yakamia 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 two terms leading up to your school's scheduled review

Melesha Sands
Deputy Director General, Schools

References

- 1 National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy
- 2 Information and communications technology