



Department of
Education

Shaping the future

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

Context

Craigie Heights Primary School was established in 2009 and is situated 23 kilometres north of the Perth central business district, within the North Metropolitan Education Region. The school gained Independent Public School status in 2013.

It has an Index of Community and Socio-Educational Advantage rating of 1025 (decile 4).

Currently there are 369 students enrolled from Kindergarten to Year 6.

Craigie Heights Primary School has the support of the School Board and a Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C).

The first Public School Review of Craigie Heights Primary School was conducted in Term 2, 2019. This 2024 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:

- As this is the second cycle review, the leadership commenced the process with discussions relating to improvements identified in the 2019 Public School Review report. This is a prudent measure by applying prior learning to the next review.
- Staff commitment to the review was exemplified by the level of enthusiasm and interest demonstrated by those attending each domain meeting during the validation stage of the process.
- The Electronic School Assessment Tool (ESAT) submission provided a range of events and reliable documents providing additional evidence of actions undertaken to demonstrate continuous improvement.
- Framed by the self-assessment key questions, overview statements were prepared to provide an account of the journey the school has been on since the last review. Changes to the school leadership team over that period provided context to the validation process.
- During the validation visit, there was input from a cross-section of the school which included, school leaders, teachers, support staff and students. Parent representations of the School Board and P&C elaborated on the school culture and described their engagement in school planning.

The following recommendations are made:

- For future Public School Reviews give consideration to including specific reference to how the school responded to the recommendations of the previous review.
- Review the school's existing data gathering procedures. Have regard for the extent to which evidence used is reliable, gathered efficiently and that the analysis provides transparent levels of objectivity for school planning decisions.

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Relationships and partnerships

Organisational success for schools is cradled and nurtured through the extent to which emphasis is placed on building and maintaining high levels of interpersonal relations between staff and strong partnerships with its local community.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The school's culture is defined by a tight knit supportive community and a staff embracing the added value they bring to the school's role in providing a safe and caring environment.
- Partnerships, both within the school and between it and the community it serves, have a level of tangible vibrancy. From the staff there is an eagerness to serve, balanced with an equal willingness to support the school from the community.
- The School Board, representative of parents, staff and community, is fully conversant with its governance responsibilities, rigorous in its practices and supportive of the school ethos.
- The school is fortunate to have external engagement with a local chaplain 2 days a week. This is complemented with a robust level of enthusiasm for Aboriginal culture and the Craigie Kongks Fathering group, which delivers a range of family activities.
- Open and transparent communication processes both within the school and with families contributes to an overall ethos of cohesion and collaboration.

Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Pursue a feedback methodology (sampling) to routinely gather views and opinions from staff and parents.

Learning environment

Students voiced strong support for their learning environment. There are a range of opportunities to develop their leadership skills and volunteer for tasks as part of their contribution to the school. A feeling of calmness prevails across the school and in the learning areas.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- A targeted Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) review led to the school resetting its whole-school approach to student management processes. The changes implemented have had a profoundly positive effect on the impact of classroom management practices and, more broadly, on the tone of the school.
- The community understands and is committed to the shared values the school promotes. Students are encouraged to pursue personal excellence in both their learning and social relationships.
- Documented education plans are created in Special Educational Need planning, with all staff aware of their obligations to follow-through on interventions designed to address areas of concern. Early intervention is based on speech screening conducted in Kindergarten and is followed up with On-entry data, DIBELS¹ and Progressive Achievement Tests (PAT).
- Case conference processes are well understood by staff who acknowledge the support they receive from school leaders and the regional school psychology service.
- The school has an enviable record in work done to promote Aboriginal culture. Aboriginal learning perspectives are respectfully incorporated in all facets of a students' experience. From regularised visits to the yarnning circle, students building their Aboriginal vocabular and using a bank of resources placed in each teaching block.

Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Continue the development and refinement of PBS scripts for the 'Craigie Code'.

Leadership

Successful leaders identify and intentionally develop leaders within their school. Evidence of emerging leaders seeking to strengthen their school's performance through personal professional learning and enthusiastically sharing with colleagues is contagious and frequently exists in these schools.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Staff acknowledged that there are opportunities quite early in their careers to undertake leadership roles and responsibilities. This may account for the notable interest of Level 3 aspirants during the review.
- The review has triggered a deeper understanding of, and buy-in to, engaging with the school's improvement agenda. The existence of a notable level of professional regard staff have for each other, fortifies the collective will to improve school performance.
- The spirit of staff teamwork is exemplified through the quality of collaboration between teachers and education assistants. This extends from the classroom to specialised committees where teachers and education assistants share their respective skill and wisdom for the benefit of students.
- The leadership team has worked hard to maintain staff focus on what matters most during times of uncertainty. They have been very effective in ensuring any difficulties are met with calmness, respect and empathy.
- Noting the importance of prudent responses to school expenditure needs, the manager corporate services has demonstrated agile leadership by ensuring staff clearly understood the Department's Funding Agreement for Schools before announcing potentially contentious budget management decisions.

Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Take immediate steps to explore options to develop a new business plan. Ensure priorities are evidence based, improvement targets explicit and milestones included to monitor progress.

Use of resources

Judicious deployment of school resources required a clear-eyed understanding of school planning priorities. Flexible structures and processes are necessary to ensure schools maximise available school funding allocations for the benefit of students.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- A streamlined approach to the management of school resources followed a root and branch examination of existing school financial management practices. Notable strengths of the improved processes included, but not limited to, an external audit, the preparation of a financial management handbook and a decluttering of the chart of accounts.
- Finance Committee members are well informed and, in combination with cost centre managers, plan proactively but prudently by carefully considering the optimum student impact.
- Disability resourcing and targeted initiative funding is used to support identified students. Almost all the funding is used to maximise education assistant support in the classroom.
- The P&C generously provide funds, value adding to the school's ability to deliver a creative learning environment complementing the school's budgetary priorities.
- Staff understand that workforce planning aligns with priorities for students. It follows that processes involving staff needs are carefully and transparently considered, focusing always on student needs.

Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Bearing in mind potentially fewer enrolments, take immediate steps to develop a comprehensive workforce plan inclusive of a 3 year horizon to take account of potential staff movement.

Teaching quality

Schools where there is a persistent level of student underperformance have a choice. This school is credited for the courage exhibited in examining student performance and asking themselves, 'what do we need to do to change in our teaching practice?'

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- It is to the profound credit of the school's leadership that they conducted a frank and fearless examination of data and classroom strategies. Themes around student engagement, the pace of lessons and lesson structure were identified as areas for improvement.
- Extensive professional learning on an explicit teaching lesson framework incorporated the components of explicit instruction including, but not limited to, daily reviews, whiteboards to show for instant student feedback and a plenary. This model clearly aligns to the Department's Teaching for Impact Strategy.
- By successfully applying to join the Centre for Excellence – Explicit Teaching in Literacy project, the school was allocated a mentor school with an impressive record of teaching excellence and sustained student success.
- Resources have been invested in releasing teachers to observe and be observed by expert teachers from their mentor school. Staff shared their enthusiasm, noting much improved student engagement in learning and greater enjoyment in teaching.
- To ensure the sustainability of Impact for Teaching, lead teachers and coaches are being trained to embed values and skills that emphasise evidence-based targeted explicit teaching practices in every class.

Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Collaboratively settle on an agreed model of professional growth and accountability for all staff.

Student achievement and progress

When teachers express a keen interest in knowing more about the use of data to inform their teaching practice, they are demonstrating ownership of their student outcomes.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Following an analysis of NAPLAN² data and engagement in an honest discussion about the need for consistency in the use of data to inform teaching practice, the school embarked on a journey of strengthening a school-wide commitment to improving data literacy.
- Targeted attention is being given to identifying assessment tools including, Brightpath, Year One Phonics Screening, PLD³, On-entry, ACER⁴ – PAT, DIBELS and employing a speech pathologist for early years speech screening. Digital student journals to further streamline existing data files processes are planned.
- The close alliance between teachers and education assistants provides a composite lens of knowledge and experience when assessing student progress, particularly those with learning difficulties.
- Collaborative duties other than teaching across year levels enhances the development of common assessment tasks providing time to discuss achievement targets and grade allocations when reporting to parents.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- To enhance grade moderation and alignment, apply discipline dialogue techniques when using SCSA⁵ Judging Standards and developing robust common assessment task rubrics.
- Review whole-school data practices by applying 'tests' of reliability, efficiency and transparency to data collection and analysis.
- Take steps to strengthen processes for handing over student performance information from year to year.

Reviewers

Rod Lowther
Director, Public School Review

Tayna Grantham
Principal, Excelsior 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 2027. 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 Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills
- 2 National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy
- 3 Promoting Literacy Development
- 4 Australian Council for Educational Research
- 5 School Curriculum and Standards Authority