



Government of Western Australia  
Department of Education Services

# Craigie Heights Primary School

2015

Independent Review Findings



Independent Review of  
Independent Public Schools

## Disclaimer

This document reports the findings of the Department of Education Services' review and verification of the school's self-review. The school's self-review has been complemented by information provided by the Department of Education and the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority.

The findings of the independent review are forwarded to the School Principal, the Board Chair, the Director General of Education and the Minister for Education.

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## School and Review Details

<b>Principal:</b>	Ms Lynne Bates (Previous Principal) Mr Andrew Kilgallon (Acting) Mr Shannon Pearce (Acting)
<b>Board Chair:</b>	Mr Scott Favacho
<b>School Location:</b>	47 Spinaway Street, Craigie WA
<b>Classification:</b>	PS Class 5
<b>Number of Students:</b>	350 students
<b>Reviewers:</b>	Mrs Georgina Detiuk (Lead), Mrs Margaret Banks
<b>Review Dates:</b>	18 August and 19 August 2015

## Purpose of the Review

The purpose of the independent review is to provide assurance to the school and its community, the Director General of Education and the Minister for Education on the extent to which the school has met its commitments as outlined in its Delivery and Performance Agreement (DPA) and associated Business Plan.

The focus of the review is on:

- how well the school has implemented self-review
- how well the school has improved student learning (achievement, progress and engagement) for all students
- how well the school has created an environment that promotes learning and student well-being
- how well the school is placed to sustain and improve its performance.

## Review Methodology

The school has been required, under the DPA, to undertake annual self-assessments of its performance. The outcome of these assessments formed the basis for the school's self-review. The school sent its self-review documentation to the IPS Review Team, Department of Education Services one month prior to the commencement of the review.

The IPS reviewers supplemented the information provided by the school with information on the school's achievements, its processes and its student performance data from a number of sources which included:

- the *My School*<sup>®</sup> website
- the Department of Education School Performance Monitoring System
- Schools Online reports

Reviewers analysed the evidence presented in the school's self-review documentation to verify achievement and developed lines of inquiry where further verification was required.

An agenda for the review visit was subsequently negotiated with the Principal to enable the gathering of evidence to verify claims made by the school. During the review visit the reviewers sourced evidence to support the school's self-review claims through observation and discussion with leaders, teaching and support staff, board members, parents and students.

The evidence provided by the school, along with information gathered by the reviewers prior to and during the review visits, was used as the basis for the verification of how well the school has met its commitments as outlined in the DPA and Business Plan.

This document reports on the findings of the independent review.

## School Context

### ***What are the important features of this school's context that have an impact on student learning?***

Craigie Heights Primary School is located in the suburb of Craigie, 20 kilometres north of Perth. The school was established in 2007 through the amalgamation of Craigie and Camberwarra Primary Schools with new facilities opened in 2010. The attractive buildings consist of four classroom blocks, an enclosed assembly and canteen area, a library and administration building. The well-maintained grounds include sports fields, playgrounds and class vegetable gardens which provide further opportunities for student learning.

Towards the end of 2012, the school became an Independent Public School (IPS). During the past three years, the enrolment intake area has undergone demographic changes due to new housing developments. Increased enrolments from 270 (including Year 7) to 360 students (despite the loss of the Year 7 cohort) and modification of Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) from 982 to 1036 have been the result of the changes over this period. Of the K–Year 6 student population, 3% is Aboriginal, 4% is from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and 29.4% is from single parent, joint custody and foster families. A large number of families are emigrants from the United Kingdom.

Attendance rates have improved significantly to 82% in 2014, above the WA public schools' mean of 75%. The percentage of at-risk students has also been reduced from 18% to 13.5%.

Currently, 27 teachers (19.9 FTE) and 19 non-teaching staff (13.2 FTE) comprise the staff of the school. The school has experienced a high turnover of staff during the past three years. A new principal was appointed in 2013 and six new teachers were appointed to short-term positions. Thirteen positions were advertised and filled for 2014 to align staffing to the Business Plan, organisational structures and teacher expertise and capacity requirements. The loss of Year 7 special needs students for 2015 required reductions to the number of education assistants. Staff members provide specialist programs in physical education, music, Japanese and science.

Board membership consists of six parents and five elected staff. All have undertaken relevant training or induction programs and understand the role of an Independent Public School Board.

The focus of the Board agenda is on the Business Plan and review of the school's progress in achieving its targets. Positive communication and relationships exist between the Board and Leadership Team. The Board has conducted a survey of its effectiveness and modified operations in response to the outcomes. A small, dedicated group of parents support the Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) and actively contribute to fund-raising and school programs.

The school actively contributes to the Joondalup Schools' Network to share its expertise and to develop staff capacity. A key partnership for the school is with the adjoining Baptist Church. The church sometimes provides a breakfast club, volunteers in the school, contributes to the role of the School Chaplain and participates in enacting the school's Philanthropy Policy.

## The School's Self-Review Process

### ***How effective was the school's self-review in accounting for its performance during the period of the DPA and Business Plan?***

The 2013–2016 Business Plan clearly sets improvement targets for attendance, Early Childhood On-entry Progression, National Assessment Program—Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) Band Growth and Western Australian Monitoring Standards in Education (WAMSE). Operational plans for the curriculum learning area, student service and pastoral care and classroom plans reflect the targets, milestones and strategies of the Business Plan.

The school has established comprehensive processes for reviewing performance and for implementing an evidence-based school improvement agenda. The staff commits to regular self-assessment, analysis of school and system data in order to assess standards of student achievement and overall school performance. Standards of students' performance are measured against similar schools, Western Australian and Australian means. The cyclical process is aimed at improving academic and non-academic student performance as well as staff capacity and parent satisfaction.

Implementation of the 2013–2016 Business Plan commenced with the development of a model of distributed leadership to provide oversight of the monitoring, review, planning and development of improvement strategies across the key areas.

Collection and analysis of data, review of operations and surveys of parents and staff identified areas of strengths and where improvements are necessary. Data analysed includes Attendance Monitoring Records, Australian Early Development Index (AEDI), On-Entry Progression test results for Pre-primary and Year 1, in-school assessments and NAPLAN results. The staff had also built on the recommendations and strengths identified by the 2011 Expert Review Group (ERG) Report rating the school highly for 'significant and sustained efforts by all school staff in creating a learning environment focused on high standards of student achievement'.

Collaborative development of the Business Plan followed the comprehensive collection and analysis of the data. To ensure implementation of the Business Plan further actions included professional learning for staff, creation of effective teams and embedding of whole-school policies and processes.

The review of operational plans is conducted yearly and the Business Plan was reviewed in 2014 and reported in the Annual Report. The focus on measurement and analysis of the achievements against the milestones and targets of the Business Plan and DPA completed the cycle. The effectiveness of these processes is reflected in the significant improvements in student achievement against the targets. The foundations have also been laid for the next business planning cycle.

Evidence was provided throughout the independent review of effective implementation of the Business Plan and the self-review cycle.



## School Performance—Student Learning

### ***How well has the school performed in improving learning (achievement, progress and engagement) for all students?***

The 2013–2016 Business Plan was developed in consultation with the School Board, staff and school community. The Department of Education *Excellence and Equity Strategic Plan 2012–2015* is reflected in the four focus areas of the Business Plan: Success for all Students, Distinctive Schools, High Quality Teaching and Leadership and a Capable and Responsive Organisation. Each area has broad strategies and a set of milestones for recording, planning and implementing each strategy intended to improve school performance. A comprehensive whole-school self-assessment overview has guided the school in its practices during 2013–2014. Reviewers were able to verify this is continuing in 2015. The DPA and Business Plan are closely aligned through detailed school planning and accountability in staff performance management.

Area one: ‘Success for all students—teaching and learning’ includes academic, non-academic and the learning environment broad strategies.

The academic focus has five elements. The first, to maintain and improve the standards and achievement in literacy and numeracy, is reflected in the set of improvement targets of the Business Plan. Reading comprehension, grammar and punctuation and numeracy targets have been measured against a stable cohort band growth over a two-year period 2011–2013 and 2012–2014 as indicated by achievement in the NAPLAN. Through information from desktop analysis, school self-review documentation and interviews with school leaders and staff, the reviewers verify staff judgements to be accurate, with evidence of comprehensive staff reflections and self-analysis, sources of data with associated longitudinal tracking of student performance over time.

The 2011–2013 targets for Years 3, 5 and 7 to continue to achieve above like schools in reading were achieved, as evidenced in the NAPLAN average reading score comparison against like schools.

The target in reading to increase the number of students in Years 3 and Year 7 achieving in the top 20% was achieved by Year 3, which increased from 28% in 2011 to 37% in 2013. The target was not met by Year 7, with a decrease from 24% in 2011 to 11% in 2013.

Two targets in reading for the 2012–2014 stable cohort in Years 3–5 were achieved:

- 35–40% of students to move from band 4 or 5 to band 6 resulted in a pleasing achievement by 67% of students.
- 20% of students to move from band 5 to band 7 was achieved by 27% of students also exceeding the target.

Three targets in reading for the 2012–2014 stable cohort of students in Years 5–7 were achieved:

- 25–30% of students to move from band 6 to band 7: achievement of 57%.
- 15% of students to move from band 7 to band 8: achievement of 25%.
- 10% of students to move from band 8 to band 9: achievement of 67%.

The target in grammar and punctuation for 25–30% of the 2012–2014 stable cohort of students in Years 3–5 to move from band 5 or 6 to band 7 was achieved by 47% of students.

Two targets in grammar and punctuation for the 2012–2014 stable cohort Years 5–7 were achieved:

- 30–35% of students to move from band 5 or 6 to band 7: achievement 40%.
- 10% of students to move from band 6 to band 8: achievement 12%.

Two targets in numeracy were achieved by the 2012–2014 stable cohort in Years 3–5:

- 40–50% of students to move from band 4 to band 6: achievement of 75%.
- 30–40% of students to move from band 5 to band 7: achievement of 43%.

Two targets in numeracy were achieved by the 2012–2014 stable cohort in Years 5–7:

- 10% of students to move from band 5 to band 7: achievement of 22%
- 20% of students to move from band 6 or 7 to band 8: achievement of 44%.

An additional target in 2013 to continue to achieve above like schools in writing, was achieved by Years 3 and 7; however, there was a decline in Year 5 performance to below like schools and a decline in the performance of all years tested in writing.

Reviewers noted that as a result of concerns by staff, writing has been identified as a continuing priority for 2015. This has involved engaging students in a range of meaningful and purposeful writing experiences, teaching text structures, training staff around writing processes and differentiated teaching.

Based on the self-review and analysis of 2014 NAPLAN data, staff have identified the need for more challenging yet achievable targets based on comparative data for Australian schools. This has resulted in the development of additional targets for 2015.

A summary of the 2015 NAPLAN results show significant improvement in reading, writing and numeracy in Year 3 and Year 5 compared to 2014.

The Year 3–5 stable cohort achieved above Australian schools in reading, writing and numeracy, equal to Australian schools in grammar and punctuation and slightly below in spelling.

The target to maintain the percentage of Year 3 students in the top two bands above like schools was achieved in reading, writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation and numeracy. The target of having no Year 3 student below the benchmark was achieved in writing, spelling and numeracy.

In addition to the above improvements, the school has made excellent gains in student progress and achievement for Year 3–5 compared to like schools, moving numeracy, reading, writing, grammar and punctuation from the lower progress/higher achievement quadrant in 2014, to the higher progress/higher achievement quadrant in 2015. The staff is commended on this achievement.

The staff has attributed the significant improvement in 2015 NAPLAN results and achievement of the majority of targets to:

- a priority focus on writing and the development of a consistent whole-school approach in teaching genres and the gradual release model
- the priority area of number with implementation of the Bar Model for problem solving
- continued implementation of uninterrupted literacy and numeracy blocks with clear lesson design, explicit lesson intentions and criteria
- guided reading in all classes Pre-primary to Year 6
- literacy and numeracy specialist teachers released to work alongside classroom teachers and targeted small groups in Years 2 to 6

- implementation of a case-management approach to identify, plan for and monitor students who are not meeting their potential.

Analysis of 2015 NAPLAN results highlights two areas—spelling, and grammar and punctuation—that will need more fine-grained analysis to identify areas for whole-school targeted improvement and individual/group case-management to improve progress and achievement.

The second academic element, to improve quality teaching through building staff capacity to deliver improvements in academic achievement of students, is also aligned to maintaining and improving standards of achievement in literacy and numeracy and evidenced in the wide range of school practices. Literacy and numeracy committees have been established with representatives from phase-of-learning and cluster teams. Uninterrupted literacy and numeracy blocks have been introduced. Collaborative team meetings to support teachers in planning and moderation exercises have been facilitated through scheduled common DOTT time.

Data driven and detailed whole-school annual operational plans explicitly outline whole-school approaches and targets to be achieved and standards of the National School Improvement Plan (NSIP). Year-level and class planning includes provision for targeted groups and individual students. Lead teachers work alongside teachers to support student achievement in writing, reading and mathematics and assist where individual students require a case management approach to their learning. Individual Education Plans and Curriculum Adjusted plans are developed. Leaders have been assigned to learning areas comprising phase one of the Australian Curriculum and have guided the alignment of scope and sequence planning.

Even years testing and data analysis based on NAPLAN has been implemented for Years 2, 4 and 6. A CHPS lesson design is implemented based on the gradual release model of instruction to guide students towards independently using different skills, strategies and procedures. Students are encouraged through 'We are learning to...—WALT and 'What I'm looking for...—WILF' to ensure they understand lesson expectations. The staff values the role of education assistants, assigning them a role as educators and building their capacity in guided reading, phonological awareness and conducting programs such as 'Support a Reader', Multi-lit and Mini-lit and guiding students in the use Paul Swan resources for mathematics.

Enhancing rigour in Kindergarten and Pre-Primary education has been guided by the Early Years Framework, the Australian Curriculum and the National Quality Standard. Early intervention has been facilitated by the introduction of the 0–8 program. Parents are offered the opportunity to engage in information sessions relevant to their child’s physical, social and emotional development and links with outside agencies. Survey results indicate a high level of satisfaction in attending these activities.

Achievement of the 2014 Early Childhood improvement targets for speaking and listening, writing and numeracy measured against the cohort’s On-Entry testing results is as follows:

- speaking and listening—the target for 60% of Pre-primary students to achieve a 0.3 progression in Term 1 was achieved (65%); the target for 100% of students to be at Standard 1 in Term 4 was not achieved (67%)
- writing—the target for 25% of Pre-primary students to achieve a 0.2 progression in Term 1 was achieved (42%); the target for 100% of students to be at Standard 1 in Term 4 was not achieved (51%)
- numeracy—the target for 80% of Pre-primary students to achieve a 0.7 progression in Term 1 was achieved (100%); the target for all students to be at Standard 1 in Term 4 was achieved.

Early Childhood staff members have engaged in detailed analysis of On-Entry data, asking the questions ‘What does the evidence tell us?’ and ‘What are we seeking to achieve?’ Pre-Primary 2015 progression point targets in speaking and listening writing, and numeracy were identified and have been achieved for Term 1 2015. Areas of strength and weakness have been identified and strategies, processes, resources and structures determined and documented in operational planning. These target speaking and listening, and writing as areas for explicit teaching of phonological and phonemic awareness skills to Kindergarten and Pre-primary students and oral language skills to strengthen the development of foundation literacy skills.

The 2011–2013 science target to increase the percentage of Year 5–7 students achieving in the top 20% was not achieved. However, both the Year 5 and Year 7 cohorts consistently achieved a greater percentage of students in the top 20% of the State compared to like schools. Achievement of the 2012–2014 target to increase the percentage of students achieving above the WAMSE Standard from 45% in Year 5 to 65% in Year 7 was 63%, just marginally below the Business Plan target of 65%.

In 2013, the staff acted on the analysis of science results by continuing to raise the profile of science across the school, allocating time for a sustainability teacher-leader to work with staff, purchasing guided-reading texts to support the conceptual understandings in science and provided professional learning for staff through SciTech.

In 2014, a science specialist was appointed and operated from a dedicated science laboratory-style classroom. A Science Committee was established which developed a range of science scope and sequence documents reflective of the Australian Curriculum. An integrated Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) unit was developed using Web 2.0 technologies to introduce upper primary students to computer programming. The staff is commended for this initiative.

The Business Plan element to enhance science skills and understandings for all students through explicit teaching by the science specialist teacher and the classroom teacher was interrupted in Semester 1, 2015 due to financial constraints precluding the continuation of the science specialist. The role became operational again in Term 3, strongly endorsed by the School Board.

Students have participated in a number of science incursions including with Earth Sciences Western Australia, International Centre for Radio Astronomy Research and the South East Regional Centre for Urban Landcare.

With State testing by WAMSE no longer occurring, the staff is intent on conducting school-based assessments to monitor student achievement and continue to develop the STEM program.

The Business Plan element to improve and support Information Technology and Communication (ICT) capabilities across the school to enhance teaching and learning has been implemented over time. During 2013–2014, time was allocated for release of a teacher to support staff in using ICT in the classroom and mentoring cyber-safety lessons, including engaging students in Years 4–7 with an online course on strategies to deal with potential issues surrounding social networks. School wireless capabilities were enhanced, an additional bank of iPads and laptops purchased. In 2015, a program commenced to train teachers in computer science (computer coding). Reviewers observed the progress made of this initiative during visits to Year 1 and Year 6 classrooms.

The Craigie Heights Primary School Excellence Program was introduced in Term 2, 2015. Guided by specialist teachers, Year 5 and 6 students selected a learning area of the Australian Curriculum to study purposefully and in depth

and tested their skills by entering competitions with other state and national schools. The excellence program complements the school's 'Be An Achiever' goal within the Positive Behaviour Support program. Students conveyed to reviewers their enthusiasm for participating in the program.

The target success for all students: teaching and learning/non-academic is about enhancing inclusivity and diversity, fostering physical and emotional well-being and broadening the responsibilities of student leaders. Fostering physical and emotional well-being is a characteristic of the school that is commented on in the School Performance—Learning Environment section of this report.

The staff has acted on information from the latest Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) in providing Kindergarten and Pre-primary transition programs to address vulnerabilities relating to readiness for school. Information from the Student Attendance Monitoring System has been used to recognise and provide support for students whose attendance places them at educational risk. The Business Plan attendance target to reduce the number of students at indicated risk as identified by an attendance rate of 80–89% was achieved, with a decrease from 17.9% in 2012 to 13.5 % in 2014. Evidence indicates that progress is being made to achieve the attendance target of reducing the percentage of students at indicated risk to 10% in 2015. Attendance at school is included in the student good standing policy and case management includes weekly monitoring of students at risk, through Integris.

Under the guidance of a lead teacher, the Student Council provides opportunities to broaden responsibilities of student leaders. Explicit leadership skills are taught and opportunities provided for students to demonstrate leadership qualities. Student councillors have attended external leadership training and school Board meetings, and were engaged in a Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat (SWOT) workshop, the analysis of which was used as part of the school's self-review.

## School Performance—Quality of the Learning Environment

***How well has the school performed in creating an environment that promotes learning and well-being for all students and the attainment of the school vision?***

Becoming an Independent Primary school provided the opportunity and impetus for staff, the school Board and parents to develop the new vision statement to 'inspire all children to achieve their best through learning, living and playing in harmony' and for this to be achieved by developing a culture of educational excellence through quality teaching and learning driven by research into what is best for children.

The staff is implementing an impressive range of support programs and structures to support the social, emotional development and competence of students. The cohesive pastoral care committee, in collaboration with staff and parents has guided ownership by the whole school community of the Positive Behaviour Support Program (PBS). The PBS program underpins the behaviour management approach at the school. Posters of the four expected behaviours are visible at the front office and in all classrooms. Students are explicitly taught the shared common language of the expected behaviours: be responsible, be safe, be respectful and be an achiever. These are reinforced using a number of incentive strategies that acknowledge when students demonstrate the expected behaviours. The staff and parent community have also developed and adopted a positive code of conduct (Agreement). Student Councillors act as peer mentors in providing a problem solving approach to minor disagreements between students.

The School Chaplain has an integral role in contributing to the well-being of students, staff and the wider community. The Chaplain's Champion is published in every school newsletter, acknowledging students who have demonstrated positive characteristics. The Chaplaincy program has facilitated the introduction of programs such as the 'Aussie Optimism Optimistic Thinking Course' and the 'Build Up Zone (BUZ) Together'.

A buddy system between the upper and lower primary classes has been implemented. 'Good standing status' is recognised as a right of all students. A system is implemented to encourage students to maintain their good standing status, which includes school attendance and participation in the holiday reading program.



The Business Plan 2013–2016 focus areas of *Distinctive School, High Quality Teaching and Leadership* and a *Capable and Responsive Organisation* are considered imperative to the school intent and belief in providing a learning environment that is supportive, stimulating and nurturing in maximising the potential and ensuring the well-being of all.

Planning for and implementation of strategies to demonstrate the school is a *distinctive school*, are based on the belief that education is a shared responsibility and a partnership of home, school and the community. Parents who met with the reviewers, confirmed the staff encourages and provides many opportunities for involvement, such as class parent representative, assisting in sports carnivals and excursions. The 0–8 program attests to the school providing opportunity for parent partnerships to be developed from an early stage of a child's development. A 'Find Three for Me' program invites parents to dedicate three hours of their time to the school. In honouring the commitment to the belief in the influence of fathers/father figures', the school has recently introduced, with the support of a steering committee of fathers, a Fathering Project to engage fathers in their child's life and learning.

The staff takes pride in being a 'reading' school. Home/school partnerships are fostered by students participating in the holiday reading challenge. 'Maths is Fun' is included in the school newsletters in the form of family 'Safe Cracker' activity and Maths Activity Day (MAD). The Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) is an opportunity for parents to have an active role within the school. The P&C is a valued part of the school that has funded programs such as the *Bluearth* and *Mathletics* programs, and made a significant financial contribution to the nature playground. That the staff has a strong relationship with the local community was rated strongly in parent responses in the National Opinion Survey 2014.

The staff has a commitment to sustainability practices. Specific projects have included class gardens, Waterwise, Wastewise and Solarwise. Parents have participated in working bees and each class has a student environmental officer. In March 2015, the school received a Sustainability and Incentive grant from the North Coastal Zone, Child and Adolescent Community Health for the school's Healthy School project—Learning, Living and Playing Sustainably.

In promoting Craigie Heights Primary School as a *distinctive school*, a branding and marketing strategy was introduced. Reviewers verify this has been successful. The administrative support staff have been trained to maintain the operational capacity of the informative and high level of

presentation of the school website and the use of the school App. Front signage, school stationery, pop-up banners used at school assemblies and corporate folders used in the student enrolment process have provided opportunity to observe the distinctiveness of the school. The school is well represented in the local newspaper where celebrations of school programs and student successes are published.

The Business Plan focus area of *High Quality Teaching and Leadership* is evidenced in the school's implementation of the Department of Education directive to use a whole-school approach to peer observation in providing robust professional advice to teachers' alignment with the introduction in 2014 of the visible teaching program. The Australian Professional Standards for Teachers has guided staff performance management processes. Staff accountability is also linked to observable planning and assessment of the progress of targets contained in the Business Plan and annual operational plans. Staff members are appraised by the leadership team and have support to apply for Level 3 Classroom status; which one staff member achieved in 2014.

The high quality and informative school newsletters, and Annual School Reports provide photographic evidence of opportunities for students to participate in a wide range of experiences and celebrations to promote and honour inclusivity and diversity. These include: the ANZAC assembly, Harmony Day, Grandparents' morning tea, Aboriginal incursions and celebrating National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) week.

A two-year 'Care Plan' includes students raising funds and developing an awareness of autism, cerebral palsy, childhood leukaemia, and hearing impairment. The School Pastoral Care policy, guided in its implementation by the Pastoral Care Committee, includes the Watch Over Craigie Heights (WOCH) a charitable fund that assists students and families with school associated costs. In enacting its Philanthropy policy, the school sponsors a child from Bangladesh and participates in 'Operation Christmas Child—Shoebboxes'. These initiatives are commended.

Curriculum leaders have been trained through the Institute for Professional Learning—Train the Trainer program in English, mathematics, science, and history. Key leadership positions and committees were established to support the full implementation of Phase One of the Western Australian Curriculum. Staff members have been provided professional learning through staff

meetings and after school workshops such as the Craigie Western Australian Curriculum Implementation (WACI) Club.

An exemplary model of distributed leadership is evident. There is also evidence of an open culture across the school where staff trust and respect each other and where reflective practice enables meaningful collaboration, planning, action, reflection, assessment and replanning by senior leadership, curriculum and lead teachers, committee members, phase-of-learning and cluster staff. The Principal is commended on the distributed leadership model which has created leadership positions, developed leadership capacity of staff and allowed shared and active engagement in the school's decision making processes.

The reviewers met with members of the student council and verify students as capable and articulate in sharing their role as school student leaders, mentors and in performing their roles at assemblies. With the support of the school administration team, student councillors have taken an active role in promoting and organising school activities associated with the Philanthropic policy. Student councillors are commended on their commitment to their leadership role.

The staff can be proud of achieving the Business Plan focus of a *Capable and Responsive Organisation* that uses resources wisely, and works with the school community to ensure student success. Feedback from parent, staff, and student surveys and SWOT analysis attest to this. The school Board and school administrators work deliberately to ensure ethical management of resources by reviewing and updating the school resourcing plans to maintain budget performance and efficiency. Enrolments are expected to increase with the development of the nearby Vive housing estate.

## School Performance—Sustainability

### *How well placed is the school to sustain and improve its performance into the next planning cycle?*

One full cycle of business planning and review has been effectively implemented. The foundations are laid for the high-quality cyclical process to continue. The Vision of *Learning, Living and Playing in Harmony* is embedded and very clearly reflected back to the reviewers by students, staff and parents. All staff contribute effectively to the school's vision with the singular purpose of supporting students to achieve their best learning outcomes. The culture of improvement is evident across the whole school through well-documented policies and processes, induction and professional development.

Targets are clearly set, based on evidence and guide decisions related to plans, staff roles and resource allocation. Staff members monitor and review the progress of individual students and the whole school. The Board endorses the Business Plan and monitors progress of the school through regular reports and discussion at meetings. The development of the next Business Plan commenced recently with the review of data, Annual Report 2014 and SWOT analysis.

The Board is established and oversees the school's governance, with members bringing diverse skills and expertise. A survey of the effectiveness of the Board has resulted in modification to their mode of operation and plans for portfolio responsibilities to be assigned to Board members. The terms of reference for the Board require triennial election of the Board. While this is due at the end of this year, a plan is in train for adjustment to this requirement to stagger election of members rather than as it currently stands, for the full Board at one time. This change to the terms of reference is essential to enable continuity and succession planning for the Board.

Relationships between Principal, Deputy Principal and coordinators are highly collaborative. The role the Principal has played in leading the school's successful operations as an IPS is noteworthy. In particular, the encouragement and capacity building of all staff to 'step up' to initiate and lead as well as to work in teams, was evident. The whole-school approach to formulating, implementing and reviewing the Business Plan is fundamental to the school's operations.

While the school currently has in place sound foundations to move from strength to strength, a number of risk factors are in play due to anticipated changes. A new Principal will be appointed to the school from 2016; the board membership, including the chairperson, will change; and staff turnover, due to potential promotions and retirements, is unknown.

While a growth in student enrolment due to new housing developments is anticipated, the extent of the growth is unknown. As a result, there is uncertainty as to what adjustments are likely to be made to Student-Centred Funding and hence to the school budget. Changes to the budget will impact on arrangements for classes, specialist programs and teaching responsibilities of staff, including the requirement for deputy principals to take on a teaching responsibility in addition to their leadership roles. It will be important for the 2016 school leadership team and Board to continue to build on the hard work, efforts and commitment of all over the past three years to develop and implement the next Business Plan.

## Conclusion

Staff have engaged in a number of self-assessment reviews, analysed a range of data to identify patterns and trends in student progress and achievement to determine the effectiveness of strategies and the set milestones of the 2013–2016 Business Plan.

The morale and personal accountability of staff is high. A time frame for change has enabled staff to understand the direction the school is taking and make a commitment to act, belong and commit to school operations.

The administrative staff has identified the need to develop a strategic approach and an administrative tool reflective of the comprehensive self-review cycle, to track and monitor the implementation of strategies and milestones within the Business Plan. There is a recognised need to further embed key programs, strategies and initiatives.

The staff, with support of the School Board, is well placed to build on current levels of student engagement, progress and achievement. Discussion with staff, parents, board members and students, together with exemplary documentation provided throughout the independent review process, demonstrated Craigie Heights Primary School's significant progress towards fulfilling its commitment to the Business Plan and DPA. This is achieved by providing opportunities for success for all students and by being a distinctive school where high-quality leadership and teaching is occurring within a capable and responsive organisation.

## Commendations

***The following areas are commended:***

- Principal and staff on the collaborative, inclusive, whole-school approach to the development of evidence-based programs to improve student achievement
- the introduction of upper primary students to computer programming through the integrated Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) unit using Web 2.0 technologies
- the excellent gains made in Year 3 to 5 student progress and achievement compared to like schools, moving numeracy, reading, writing, grammar and punctuation from the lower progress/higher achievement quadrant in 2014 to the higher progress/higher achievement quadrant in 2015
- the comprehensive reporting on the progress of the Business Plan targets to the school and wider community through the informative 2013 and 2014 Annual School Reports
- the distributed leadership model which has created leadership positions, developed leadership capacity of staff and allowed shared and active engagement in the school's decision-making processes
- the implementation of the school's Philanthropy policy, including the Watch Over Craigie Heights (WOCH) charitable fund and sponsorship of a child overseas
- the commitment of student councillors to their leadership role.

## Area for Improvement

***The following area for improvement is identified:***

a strong focus be placed on succession planning and induction processes for the Board and staff to ensure continuity for business planning and review processes and the operation of the school.

## Declaration

We, the undersigned, hereby confirm that the information provided in this findings document is to the best of our knowledge true and correct and is based on the verification of the evidence provided by Craigie Heights Primary School as part of the Department of Education Services' independent review process. The Principal and Board Chair have had an opportunity to comment on any matters of fact contained within this document.

  
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Mrs Georgina Detiuk, Lead Reviewer

11 November 2015  
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Date

  
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Mrs Margaret Banks, Reviewer

10 November 2015  
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Date

  
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Mr Richard Strickland, Director General,  
Department of Education Services

12 / 11 / 15  
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Date