



Department of
Education

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Public education
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Meekatharra School of the Air

Public School Review

October 2018



PUBLIC SCHOOL REVIEW

Purpose

All Western Australian public schools are reviewed every three years 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 that a school is operating effectively and 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.

The principal provides the review team with a self-assessment of the school's performance based on evidence gathered by the principal and staff. Information validated by the review team is considered before and during the school visit. This forms the basis for the school review report. The report is provided to the principal, the chair of the school board/council 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 and the Funding Agreement for Schools.

School performance rating

This performance rating is based on information gained from the self-assessment submission and the validation process. It is focussed on a review of the following areas of school performance: relationships and partnerships; learning environment; leadership; use of resources; teaching quality; and student achievement and progress.

The school's performance rating is:

	Effective
	The school demonstrates effective practice in creating the conditions required for student success.

	Needs Improvement
	The school has aspects of its practice below expectations and needs supported action to improve student success.

Context

Meekatharra School of the Air is located in Geraldton, 420 kilometres north of Perth. Since opening in 1959, the facility has occupied various sites including the grounds of the Royal Flying Doctor Service in Meekatharra, and Beachlands Primary School. In 2011, the school relocated to a purpose built facility in Bluff Point, Geraldton.

The school, with an Index of Community and Socio-Educational Advantage rating of 986 (decile 6), currently enrolls 30 students from Kindergarten to Year 6.

Teachers communicate daily with their students through 'SABA' via satellite communications. These lessons are still referred to as 'air lessons' and vary in length from 20 minutes to 45 minutes.

Families have the option of air lessons or non-air lessons. If they choose the non-air lesson option, they are presented with the same written work, but miss the daily contact with the school. The materials for all lessons are sent in three-week instalments to ensure students have the necessary learning experiences and activities for each set of lessons in that period.

School self-assessment validation

The Principal submitted a comprehensive school self-assessment.

The following aspects are confirmed:

- A sound range of credible evidence was selected for analysis.
- Staff engagement in the school assessment process was collaborative.
- Analysis was enhanced significantly during the school visit.
- There was alignment between the performance evidence, judgements about areas for improvement and strategies to be used.
- A culture of reflection and continuous improvement was evident.

The following recommendation is made:

- Plans for strategies for improvement to include assessments of impact.

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Relationships and partnerships	
<p>Leaders have facilitated the growth of a collaborative and supportive culture within the school and with key stakeholders. Through genuinely respectful interactions, strong commitment to the students and their families has been fostered. Effective communication processes at all levels contribute to school success.</p>	
Effectiveness	<p>The review team validates the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnerships have been established and are fostered with their local and School of the Air networks. Through School Council training, members have developed a greater understanding of their role. The School Council is developing an engagement with school direction. Respectful and engaging relationships are evident between staff and between staff and students. Home visits and camps are an integral part of the educational experience. Two-way relationships between teachers and home tutors are a critical aspect of the success of the School of the Air program.
Improvements	<p>The review team validates the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to focus on the engagement of the School Council in their specific role in setting strategic direction for the school. Develop an implementation plan for the <i>Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework</i>.

Learning environment	
<p>The establishment of the desired learning environment in this unique educational setting has been optimised by explicit school processes and procedures. Planning for students at educational risk is targeted and comprehensive.</p>	
Effectiveness	<p>The review team validates the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students at educational risk (SAER) are identified, supported and monitored effectively. The support teacher learning role is valued highly for the management of SAER and building the capacity of key stakeholders in their specific roles. Responsibilities and expectations of teachers, home tutors and students are documented and understood. Additional elements of the curriculum, such as camps that support the development of the whole-child, are relevant and effective.
Improvements	<p>The review team validates the following action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage Ngala Early Learning and Development to conduct a workshop for parents regarding developing student resilience.

Leadership

Leaders have facilitated a strong commitment by all staff to deliver a distinctive method of curriculum delivery. Staff are supported strategically to ensure successful implementation of programs aligned to student needs.

Effectiveness	<p>The review team validates the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A shared understanding by staff of school direction.• Staff actively engage in school improvement planning.• There is alignment between what is identified through review and what is planned and acted upon.• Professional learning is aligned to capacity building to address school priorities.• Staff acknowledge leadership support for their professional and personal wellbeing.
Improvements	<p>The review team validates the following action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue the development of structures and processes for peer observation.

Use of resources

The use of resources is aligned clearly to school management and operations. All staff are involved in decision making and monitoring processes.

Effectiveness	<p>The review team validates the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Resourcing is targeted to support essential personnel and programs.• Resource allocation decisions are evidence-based.• Tools for asset and resource requisition and management are creative and contextually relevant.• The school is resourced well to meet the curriculum needs of staff and students.
Improvements	<p>The review team validates the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop a workforce plan that considers existing and future human resourcing specific to this context.• Develop a recruitment profile of the characteristics and skills required of staff best-suited to work in this context.

Teaching quality

There is whole-staff understanding of the need for quality teaching to underpin successful learning in this context. Agreed beliefs about teaching and learning are articulated by the leaders and shared by staff.

Effectiveness	<p>The review team validates the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher collaboration is focused on student achievement and progress with performance data used to inform planning and differentiation. • A contextually relevant lesson design and framework for teaching is implemented consistently and effectively. • A strong commitment to improvement is demonstrated by a tailored sequence in curriculum planning. • Staff demonstrate a focus on information and communication technology to enhance the curriculum. • Work sets have been created to cater for the current needs of students. Greater engagement has resulted from the quality of the lesson activities aligned to the Western Australian Curriculum.
Improvements	<p>The review team validates the following action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue the development of staff understanding of the significance of data analysis and its relevance in informing planning for improvement.

Student achievement and progress

Comprehensive student assessment ensures the accuracy and currency of the measurement of student achievement and progress. This is supported by the Support Teacher Learning role.

Effectiveness	<p>The review team validates the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff resources are allocated strategically to ensure program implementation is sustainable. • The Support Teacher Learning teacher builds the capacity of home tutors to support student learning. • A range of school-based assessments is utilised to make judgements about individual student achievement and progress. • School-based assessments align to systemic performance data. • The Promoting Literacy Development spelling program is having a positive impact on teaching continuity and improved student learning in the early years.
Improvements	<p>The review team validates the following action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the Sounds-Write program to support further improvements in student spelling in the upper primary years.

Reviewers

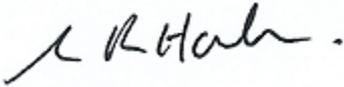
BRETT HUNT
Director, Public School Review

FIONA YEATS
Principal, Bruce Rock District High School
Peer Reviewer

Endorsement

Based on this report, I endorse your school performance rating of 'effective'.

Your next school review is scheduled for 2021.



LINDSAY HALE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, PUBLIC SCHOOLS