



Government of Western Australia  
Department of Education

# East Hamersley Primary School

2018

Review Findings



Independent Public School Review

## **Disclaimer**

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## School and Review Details

<b>Principal:</b>	Ms Lyn Dawson
<b>Board Chair:</b>	Mr Eli Greatley
<b>School Address:</b>	20 Doon Way, Hamersley WA 6022
<b>Number of Students:</b>	171
<b>ICSEA<sup>1</sup></b>	1059
<b>Reviewers:</b>	Dr Lesley Payne (Lead) Mr Bill Gibson
<b>Review Dates:</b>	22 and 23 March 2018

## Purpose of the Review

The purpose of this review is to provide assurance to the principal and school community, the board and the Director General of the Department of Education of the extent to which the school staff and board have met the commitments of the Delivery and Performance Agreement (DPA). The review verifies the degree to which there are effective processes in place bringing about improved student learning.

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<sup>1</sup> The Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) is a scale of socio-educational advantage that is computed for each school. It allows for comparisons to be made between schools that are matched according to their socio-educational advantage, allowing fair comparisons of NAPLAN results between schools with students who have a similar ICSEA. The median ICSEA value is 1000.  
[http://www.acara.edu.au/resources/Fact\\_Sheet\\_-\\_About\\_ICSEA.pdf](http://www.acara.edu.au/resources/Fact_Sheet_-_About_ICSEA.pdf)

## **Review Methodology**

Underpinning the review methodology is the understanding that the principal is required to ensure the roles and responsibilities of the DPA are met; school performance and student improvement targets and priorities, as detailed in the school's business plan, are assessed, reviewed annually and an annual report made publicly available. The review seeks to determine the extent to which these commitments have been met.

The principal provided the school self-review conclusions to the reviewers one month prior to the commencement of the review.

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

- the My School® website
- School Performance Monitoring
- Schools Online reports

Reviewers analysed the evidence presented in the school self-review documentation to verify achievement of the DPA and business plan commitments, and developed lines of inquiry where further in-school verification was required.

An agenda for the site visit was negotiated with the principal to enable the gathering of evidence to verify claims made in the school self-review statements. During the review visit the reviewers sourced evidence to support the claims through observation and discussion with leaders, teaching and support staff, board members, parents and students where required. Where the school belongs to an Independent Public School cluster of schools the review considers whether the purpose of the cluster has been met and the benefits to the school.

The evidence provided by the principal, along with information gathered by the reviewers prior to and during the review visit, was used as the basis for judgements made in verifying how well the school staff and board have met the commitments of the DPA and business plan.

## Business Plan

### *How effective was the business plan in responding to the school's context and improving student learning (progress, achievement and engagement)?*

East Hamersley Primary School, established in 1979, is in the northern Perth Metropolitan area in the suburb of Hamersley. The school is without a local-intake area and although major roads isolate the suburb on all sides, the trend is for enrolments to come from a very wide area. The school caters for students from Kindergarten to Year 6.

The school site is attractive with many large trees and is also host to the West Coast Language Development Centre that has a Kindergarten, Pre-primary and Year 1 class on-site.

## Findings

- The business plan provides a brief contextual overview, a vision statement and a set of intentions that underpin the culture of the school. The business plan was developed in collaboration with the staff and community and endorsed by the school board.
- The business plan outlines four key focus areas: “teaching and learning,” “successful students,” “a performance and development culture” and “a capable and responsive organisation.”
- Goals and milestones are contained within the business plan to provide direction, along with a set of strategies that guide the school approach within each focus area. Academic and non-academic targets, while indicating outcomes to be achieved, were either very wide-ranging or not focused on improvement. In most cases, except for On-entry testing, they were not achieved.
- The leadership team and the board have monitored and reviewed progress against the existing business plan and were engaged in the development of the 2018–20 Business Plan. Reviewers noted targets had not substantially changed in the new plan.
- The business plan is available to the community in hard copy and digitally through Schools Online.

## Area for improvement

- Set improvement targets that are focused on the areas of most need for the enhancement of student performance.

## Teaching and Learning

*How has the quality of teaching improved and sustained student learning (progress, achievement and engagement)?*

### Findings

- The business plan includes five academic targets, five student engagement (attendance and behaviour) targets, one staff improvement target, and one parent and student satisfaction target. With an ICSEA of 1027 in 2015 the school established some challenging academic and non-academic targets set against like-schools, State and national means.
- Meetings with the leadership team, the board and curriculum leaders together with a review of school documentation, School Performance Monitoring (SPM), On-entry assessment, My School and Schools Online data enabled verification of the school's Improvement Targets Analysis 2017–18 statement.

- Academic targets state, by the end of 2017:

- “sustain Year 3 and Year 5 students’ group mean at or above like-schools in all five National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) test areas.”

This very broad target has not been achieved although the average score is consistently above like-schools in 2016 and 2017 in Year 3 numeracy and grammar and punctuation together with Year 5 reading and grammar and punctuation.

- “80% or more of Year 3 and Year 5 students to be above the national minimum standard in all five NAPLAN test areas.”

Apart from Year 5 writing and grammar and punctuation this broad percentage based target has been achieved. The leadership group and board noted the significant impact of a small cohort (10 students) on a percentage based target.

- “Year 3 and Year 5 average NAPLAN scores to be at or above the average for similar schools (Australia).”

Although My School statistically similar schools’ average data for 2017 indicates that this target has not been fully achieved, the individual domains of Year 3 grammar and punctuation and numeracy and Year 5 grammar and punctuation were above similar schools and some other domains while below, were close to similar schools.

- “Year 3 to Year 5 progress in NAPLAN to be on a positive trajectory.”

An examination of NAPLAN data confirms the summation contained in the Improvement Targets Analysis 2017–18 statement that this target has not been achieved.

- “80% of Year 1 students to meet or exceed a Literacy Progress Point and a Numeracy Development Point of one at the beginning of Year 1.”

Of the 2017 cohort 84% achieved this target in literacy and 100% in numeracy.

- Non-academic student engagement (attendance and behaviour) targets are to:

- “increase the percentage of students attending regularly to 90% or more.”

- “decrease the percentage of students in the indicated risk attendance category to 8% or less.”

- “decrease the percentage of students in the moderate risk attendance category to 0%.”

- “maintain the percentage of students in the severe risk attendance category at 0%.”

While the school has not achieved any of the challenging attendance targets, a review of SPM indicates attendance is above expected with an attendance rate in 2017 of 96% including 88% of students attending regularly. The principal believes a high number of family holidays taken during term time have been a key factor in these targets not having been achieved.

- “have 80% of students maintain good standing annually.”

An analysis of behaviour data indicated all students maintained their good standing. Conversations with students, staff and parents verified the high standard of student behaviour contributes to a positive learning environment.

- The assessment of the remaining two improvement targets of the business plan has been thorough. Conclusions that both targets were fully met were substantiated.

- The first non-academic improvement target focused on staff improvement through professional learning, teacher modelling and Australian Professional Standards for Teachers aligned performance management. The coaching and observation, collaborative practice, performance management processes and reflection against the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers using the Supporting Professional Educational Learning and Leadership (SPELL) approach is commendable. It is evident that high expectations for students sits at the forefront of the work of both administrators and teachers and a range of assessment processes are used to determine progress, identify areas of weakness and guide the implementation of new strategies.

- The second non-academic improvement target centred on the maintenance of a high level of parent and student satisfaction as measured by the National School Opinion surveys. Conversations with students, parents and the board verified the leadership team's conclusion reported in the 2017 Annual Report that a positive learning environment is provided for all students.
- While not all academic improvement targets were fully achieved, improved student performance is evidenced by:
  - comparative performance that closely reflects expectations as defined by the school's ICSEA and the previous achievement of students in 26 of 30 NAPLAN domains during the DPA.
  - an increased percentage (from 2015 to 2017) of students in the top 20% to exceed like-schools in Year 3 (numeracy and grammar and punctuation) and Year 5 (grammar and punctuation and spelling).
  - above like-schools Year 3 and Year 5 performance in the top two proficiency bands in numeracy and grammar and punctuation in both 2016 and 2017.
  - SPM overall relative achievement indicates improvement from 0.24 standard deviations (SD) in 2016 to 0.89 SD in 2017.
  - overall progress in reading that has lifted from 0.01 SD in 2016 to 0.12 SD in 2017.
- Staff used evidence gathered through the self-review process to identify focus areas designed to lift student performance in areas of concern including:
  - writing – longitudinal data indicates below like-schools performance in both Year 3 and Year 5 in 2017. Programs, including Talk for Writing, have been introduced with monitoring extended to include Brightpath.
  - reading – Year 3 longitudinal average reading score data indicates Year 3 performance is consistently below like-schools while the performance of Year 5 remains at (2017) or above (2016) like-schools. Additional to an increased focus on the teaching of phonics in the early years, including Making Sense of Phonics and Jump-Start for Grammar, the school has extended assessment strategies using the Kindergarten Assessment Tool and Oxford Assess for Years 1–6 to ensure timely teaching and learning adjustments are implemented.
  - numeracy – a focus on sustaining recent improvement by maintaining a whole-school emphasis on the acquisition of basic number facts and the development of a whole-school approach to mathematical language and problem-solving. The introduction of Progressive Achievement Tests (PAT) mathematics to monitor progress of students in Pre-primary, Year 1, Year 2, Year 4 and Year 6 will support information gathered by both the On-entry assessment and NAPLAN.

- student progress – with NAPLAN progress between Year 3 and Year 5 compared to like-schools an ongoing concern in a number of NAPLAN domains, it is recommended a greater focus on stable cohort progress be considered. This will allow examination of the impact of transiency and the effectiveness of whole-school teaching and learning programs.
- The learning for students requiring a differentiated program; including students under the care of the Department for Communities, students receiving disability allocation support and those below the national minimum standard; is guided by individual and group education plans. Under the guidance of the deputy principal the learning support team coordinates input from outside agencies, staff professional learning, parent communication, plan reviews and resource distribution.
- Conversations with staff highlighted a significant focus on teaching with strategies to ensure a school-wide plan for the implementation of the Western Australian Curriculum and Assessment Outline (Years K–10) including the alignment between the curriculum, school planning and classroom practice. SPM exemplifies the impact of this focus with the overall relative teacher judgement improving from 0.08 SD in 2016 to 0.66 SD in 2017. Scope and sequence and operational statements including English, mathematics, science, humanities and social sciences, technologies and instructional intelligence and cooperative learning verified:
  - alignment with the curriculum
  - a whole-school approach to teaching
  - a focus on the development of moderated judgements
  - commitment to endorsed programs such as explicit teaching in the literacy and numeracy blocks.
- It is evident that high expectations for all students is given primacy with a range of formative and summative assessment processes introduced to determine progress, identify areas of weakness and guide the implementation of new strategies. Classroom assessments are carried out in accordance with the updated data collection cycle with information from tests and samples of work providing the basis for discussions on student and school performance.
- The school is organised into two phase-of-learning teams (POLTs). An aspiring leader guides each team with support from an administrative team member. POLTs meet regularly with agendas having some common elements. Through the POLT structure, leaders ensure there is a consistent approach in the way each teacher operates. Teachers collaborate willingly with a number speaking positively of the opportunities this provides for consistent teaching in year levels.

- Members of the leadership team, board, curriculum leaders and staff believe embedded processes including staff collaboration, ongoing assessment and monitoring of student learning and teaching initiatives targeted at the point of identified need together with the introduction of literacy and numeracy blocks, ongoing commitment to Kagan cooperative learning and whole-school emphasis on explicit teaching will guide academic improvement.

### **Area of strength**

- The collaborative practice and performance management processes and reflection against the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers using SPELL.

### **Area for improvement**

- Establish challenging but achievable improvement targets, including a focus on stable cohort progress, to enable judgements on the effectiveness of whole-school teaching and learning programs.

## Student Performance Monitoring

*How well established are the school's self-assessment practices in accounting for school improvement?*

### Findings

- Four collaboratively developed statements: Monitoring and Assessment Plan 2018, Curriculum and Reporting Outline (PP-6), Whole School Assessment Schedule (Years K-2 and Years 3-6) and the Curriculum Assessment and Reporting statement underpin self-review. The process supports the analysis of evidence, the summation of progress and the development of recommendations for future improvement.
- Included in the self-review is examination of system level data from NAPLAN, On-entry assessment, Student Achievement Information System (SAIS) and surveys. The analysis is extended to include evidence from On-entry assessment again in Year 1, PAT science and mathematics, Oxford Assess, Kindergarten Assessment Tool, Single Word Spelling Test and moderated teacher judgements among others to inform judgements. The commendable commitment to ensure valid and reliable data is used to inform teaching and learning is exemplified by the decision to include the use of Brightpath calibrated exemplars to refine teacher judgements in writing.
- Conversations with the principal and staff verified teachers utilise considered evaluation of individual student learning as reported in the Education Assessment Reporting Software and SAIS together with the comprehensive set of school assessment tools to align teaching to identified points of need.
- A whole-school student tracking system is used to monitor the progress and achievement of students to ensure early identification of students requiring a differentiated learning program.
- The 2017 Annual Report published on the website includes detailed summations of performance in all NAPLAN domains including like-schools comparisons and performance in non-academic areas. The report includes a statement outlining future directions and the commitment to improvement. The inclusion of data supported improvement statements in other learning areas is a commendable addition that aligns with the community's focus on all aspects of learning.

- The principal and leadership team acknowledged some misalignment between the data and commentary in the 2017 Annual Report. It is recommended future annual reports include consideration of all priorities and targets described in the business plan to ensure DPA expectations are met.
- Meetings with the principal, staff and the board confirmed documentation and enabled reviewers to verify a sustainable, data-driven review process was utilised to analyse performance.

### **Areas of strength**

- A commitment to ensure current, valid and reliable data is used to inform teaching and learning.
- The inclusion in the annual report of student performance data to support a summation of performance in most learning areas.

### **Area for improvement**

- Ensure all future annual reports include an analysis of performance and achievement against priorities and targets described in the business plan.

## Program Delivery

***How well has the school performed in providing education programs that promote learning and wellbeing for all students?***

### Findings

- The principal confirms she has ensured education programs are designed and delivered to meet the needs of students and in accordance with the requirements of the *School Education Act 1999*, *School Education Regulations 2000* and the *School Curriculum and Standards Authority Act 1997*. Reviewers confirm a broad range of programs are delivered across the school to support student learning, engagement and wellbeing.
- Specialist teachers for music, Indonesian, health and physical education and visual arts complement the range of programs available for students. Music is taught across the school and the choir participates in singing festivals. The visual arts program provides for Years 1–6 in a functional room. Indonesian was re-introduced to the curriculum in 2017 from Year 3. The physical education teacher provides health, fitness, fundamental movement skills and game skills across the school from Pre-primary. While digital technology is currently addressed by classroom teachers, the school became part of the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) hub in 2017 to address learning in the areas of STEM through professional learning and introducing newly developed STEM curriculum resources. The contextually appropriate commitment to specialist programs, including the focus on STEM, is commended.
- Although not specified in the business plan, several strategies have been implemented across the school to ensure the safety and welfare of students. These include a values program, the chaplain led mentoring skills for Year 5 students and clear behaviour expectations. A clear whole-school protective behaviours program is also in place.
- An audit against the National Quality Standard has been undertaken and there is a quality improvement plan in place which the school reflects on annually. The school is meeting five (children's health and safety, physical environment, staffing arrangements, relationships with children, and collaborative partnerships with families and communities) of the seven quality areas and is working towards the remaining two (educational program and practice, and leadership and service engagement).

- A group of students from Year 3 to Year 6 talked positively about feeling safe, both on and away from school premises. The perception of a safe and inclusive learning environment reported by parents and students was further affirmed by an analysis of satisfaction survey data. The reviewers affirm high standards of student behaviour through data analysis and discussions with parents and students. Opportunities are provided for students to take leadership roles in the school.
- Staff have a shared sense of responsibility and collaboration and the reviewers note the commitment to developing distributed leadership and to ongoing professional learning linked to school programs and performance management.

### **Areas of strength**

- The safe and attractive environment for students.
- The contextually appropriate commitment to specialist programs, including the focus on STEM.

## Resourcing and Support

*How well has the school established systems to monitor and review the allocation of resources to meet strategic and operational priorities?*

### Findings

- Meetings with representatives of the five-member finance committee and the board confirmed the principal, manager corporate services, finance committee and the board consider resourcing decisions. Allocations are linked to the business plan and targeted to support identified programs, projects and intervention strategies. Leaders ensure research is undertaken prior to major decisions for expenditure.
- Both the finance and student services committees verified student and school funding is directed to the achievement of improved outcomes for identified students.
- Classroom teachers confirmed that resources are used effectively to support programs and initiatives. Contextually appropriate support for improvement in early phase literacy teaching and learning and ongoing support for intervention programs including the highly regarded Discovery Centre are commended.
- Workforce planning is guided by the staffing profile package and reviewed annually. Future planning and recruitment will consider the potential impact of enrolment fluctuations while addressing profile imbalances.
- Distributed leadership is a commendable feature with many staff engaged in leadership roles. Staff members demonstrate professional knowledge, critical self-reflection and the ability to provide professional learning, support, mentoring and review within their areas. The distributed leadership model is strategically managed to drive succession planning, support program sustainability and the ongoing professional satisfaction of staff.
- The school receives significant support from the committed Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C). The commitment to fund the development of the nature play zones to further enhance the physical environment exemplifies the contribution of the P&C.
- The finance committee indicated that with stable or increasing enrolment, the ongoing support of the P&C, together with continuing parent voluntary contributions (currently more than 90%), the school is well positioned to sustain key initiatives.

**Areas of strength**

- Contextually appropriate assistance for key priorities including the allocation of an education assistant to guide the highly regarded Discovery Centre intervention program.
- Distributed leadership which guides succession planning and supports the ongoing professional growth of staff.

## School Board

***How effective has the board been in carrying out its functions, roles and responsibilities?***

### Findings

- Through discussions, reviewers confirm that school board members are very supportive of the school and willing to contribute to its ongoing development. Board membership is representative of the school community including teacher, parent and independent community members with a range of expertise and skills ensuring compliance with the *School Education Act 1999* and *School Education Regulations 2000*.
- Board members indicated that they are well informed about school programs, performance, operations and the annual cycle of self-review. They receive and endorse relevant monthly financial reports and data is presented to the board, as evidenced through discussions and board minutes. There is interrogation of school performance data and ongoing review of the business plan but more focused improvement targets will assist the school board to more effectively monitor student achievement data and identify what is working well and what still needs to be improved.
- The board chair has served for four years. Annual school reports are endorsed but do not include information or reports from the board or the board chair. It was acknowledged that a more formal induction process for board members would sustain knowledge and capacity. Discussions with parents indicated a need for the board to communicate more effectively with the broader school community regarding the board's function and activities. Processes to determine satisfaction levels of parents, staff and students have been undertaken with results reported in the school's annual report.
- Reviewers acknowledge the commitment of the board members. In discussions, board members acknowledged the need for a review of targets in the next business plan and the need for further training and formal induction. Reviewers were informed that board training through the Department of Education would be made available to new members. Such processes would assist with the clarity of the board's role, development of a consistent understanding of its relevant accountabilities and ongoing sustainability.

### Area of strength

- The capacity and commitment of board members to support the school improvement agenda.

**Areas for improvement**

- Establish improvement targets in the business plan to assist the board to effectively monitor student achievement data and identify what is working well and what still needs to be improved.
- Investigate ways, including the annual report and school website, to further communicate with the school community regarding the board's function and activities.

## **Conclusion**

East Hamersley Primary School has an emphasis on the development of learning and teaching exemplified by a culture of leadership distribution, collaborative and consultative practice, differentiated teaching and positive relationships. While not all academic improvement targets were fully achieved, improved student performance sits at the forefront of the work of both administrators and teachers and there is a commitment to ensure the use of current, valid and reliable data to inform teaching and learning. A range of assessment processes are used to determine progress, identify areas of weakness and guide the implementation of new strategies.

The engagement of parents is high and analysis of satisfaction survey data and discussions with parents and students confirmed the school provides an inclusive, safe and respectful learning environment for all students. The reviewers can also affirm high standards of student behaviour through data analysis and discussions with parents and students.

The school has a well informed and very capable board that sets the strategic direction, oversees implementation of the school business plan and holds the school to account for its performance. Members of the leadership team, board, curriculum leaders and staff believe embedded processes including staff collaboration, ongoing assessment and monitoring of student learning and teaching initiatives will guide academic improvement.

Overall, the school's governance processes, leadership structures and development of whole-of-school plans and policies make it well placed to undertake the next step in its drive to improve student performance.

## Declaration

We confirm the information in this document is, to the best of our knowledge and based on the verification of the evidence provided by East Hamersley Primary School, true and correct.

The principal and board chair have had an opportunity to comment on any matters of fact contained within this document.



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Dr Lesley Payne, Lead Reviewer

8 May 2018

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Date



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Mr Bill Gibson, Reviewer

8 May 2018

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Date



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Mr Ken Perris, Director  
Independent Public School Review

9 May 2018

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Date