



Government of Western Australia
Department of Education

Secret Harbour Primary School

2018

Review Findings



Independent Public School Review

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School and Review Details

Principal:	Ms Lisa Fletcher
Board Chair:	Mr Nim Dissanayake
School Address:	178 Maratea Parade, Secret Harbour WA 6173
Number of Students:	772
ICSEA¹	1034
Reviewers:	Ms Kerry Usher (Lead) Ms Janine Milton
Review Dates:	19 and 20 February 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.

¹ 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://docs.acara.edu.au/resources/About_icsea_2014.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 (IPS) 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)?

Secret Harbour Primary School is located on the Western Australian coast between the cities of Rockingham and Mandurah 59 km south of the Perth CBD. The school originally opened in 1997 in a unique environment as Australia's first 'school in shops' to meet the demands of a new suburban development. It moved to its current site in 2002.

The school currently caters for 772 students in Years K–6 and has a significant number of families who have moved to the area from the United Kingdom and New Zealand. A number of students from Defence Force families are enrolled and are provided with additional support through transitional aide assistance for those moving to the area.

Findings

- The Business Plan 2015–17 describes the school vision, context and broad targets to improve school performance. It places a clear emphasis on developing the whole child. This includes a focus on enhancing literacy and numeracy skills within a safe learning environment that supports physical, social and emotional development. The major elements of the business plan include:
 - curriculum and academic learning
 - learning environment and student wellbeing
 - community partnerships.

Each area in the business plan contains targets and strategies. The school board, leadership and staff contributed to review processes related to the achievement of targets and the implementation of strategies. The review process provided judgements on the extent to which student performance in literacy and numeracy was progressing with actions to be taken to further enhance performance. Staff work collaboratively to reflect on the extent to which targets are directing the improvement agenda through good connectivity to operational plans and classroom planning.

- The principal and leadership team acknowledge that their first business plan review highlighted areas for improvement to be addressed in the next planning cycle. These include more specific targets to provide a clearer focus on areas of student improvement for classroom planning and clearer reporting on the progress of targets in the annual reports.

- Detailed annual reports to the community provide a thorough overview of school and student performance including elements of the business plan targets and strategies. The business plan is available to the community through the school website and is also considered at board meetings.

Area for improvement

- Include within future planning documents specific measurable targets that address key improvement areas identified in the school self-review process to improve student learning (progress, achievement and engagement).

Teaching and Learning

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

- Analysis of National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) results shows that the school has maintained sound academic achievement over the past three years. Trends in Year 3 achievement shows steady improvement to be slightly above like-schools across all assessments, while achievement in Year 5 has dropped to be slightly below those in like-schools across all assessments.
- Progress from Year 3 to Year 5 has been identified by the school as a focus area for improvement. This is particularly evident in declining progress in reading and spelling. In 2017, the stable cohort showed equal or better progress when compared to like-schools in all domains except spelling and punctuation. Progress in writing showed a marked improvement. This is very promising and demonstrates that current improvement strategies are beginning to take effect.
- The school leaders and staff demonstrate that they have high expectations of students. This is supported by stated targets in both the business and operational plans being aligned with like-school comparisons of progress and achievement and in their expected high standards of student engagement and behaviour.
- The school's curriculum leaders have developed an effective and efficient annual assessment and moderation schedule covering a range of subject areas and testing processes. These include NAPLAN, PM Benchmark Reading Assessment Resources, the South Australian Spelling Test, speech and language testing and screening, On-entry testing, common assessment tasks, Maths Wizard and the ACER General Ability Test.
- Provision of timely and specific feedback to students with associated individualised goal setting have been priorities in the school for the past few years, led by the principal and curriculum leaders.
- Students who require teaching and learning adjustments have individual education plans that include specific and achievable targets and considered individual delivery strategies. These plans are developed with parents and other personnel as required and are regularly monitored by classroom teachers and school leaders.

- Sound annual performance management processes are in place for teachers based on the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers as well as a school-based overview of school expectations based on the principles of effective teaching and learning and key aspects of the business plan.
- This process includes reflection of individual knowledge and practice related to explicit expectations, goal setting, professional practice and learning, feedback and review. Other school staff have appropriate processes to assure role clarity, accountability and high standards are maintained.
- Sustainability of improvement targets is strengthened by staff collaboration with the Comet Bay Professional Learning Community (CBPLC). This network of Comet Bay College and four local primary schools has developed a shared vision and commitment to the provision of quality education from Kindergarten to Year 12. Secret Harbour Primary School demonstrates a strong commitment to the achievement of CBPLC goals and targets and actively participates in the shared leadership of network programs and staff attendance at networked professional learning activities.

Areas of strength

- Thorough and coherent performance management processes that clearly set out expectations and personal progression of key elements of the business plan.
- The commitment to teacher learning and development provided through active engagement in their professional learning network.

Student Performance Monitoring

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

Findings

- The school's leadership team have documented a comprehensive overview of the school's self-evaluation process of both business plan and operational plans, demonstrating a coherent and connected understanding of evidence-based planning and accountability at multiple levels.
- Annual presentations of key findings in literacy and numeracy are presented to all staff at the beginning of each year. These presentations cover key findings and strategic directions for the year in reading, writing, mathematics and technology. The inclusion of CBPLC targets provides a comparative dataset. The inclusion of findings regarding progress and achievement of the school's business plan targets are not evident in these presentations.
- An overview of the school board's reflection on the achievement of the business plan targets was conducted in 2017. While this review showed that on balance most targets were achieved, it was clear that assessment was made more difficult due to the lack of comparative baseline performance in 2015 and no longitudinal reporting of progress towards the achievement of targets.
- The average student attendance has ranged from 93.3% to 93.9% over the past three years. These rates are very similar to like-schools and above the State average. The business plan target is for the percentage of students attending regularly to be at or above the State average. This target was easily achieved in 2016 with the school recording 81.2% and the State average being 77.1%. A more challenging target would have been like-school comparison of 80%.
- Annual reports have been developed each year and endorsed by the school board. Although these reports provide a comprehensive overview of curriculum provision and student outcomes, they do not explicitly refer to the business plan targets. This is an area that needs refining and aligning so that there is accurate ongoing reporting of progress and achievement of the business plan targets within annual reports.
- Teachers demonstrate a strong understanding of formative assessment processes to inform planning and monitor the effectiveness of their programs to improve student learning. Knowledge and understanding of these processes are

demonstrated by classroom teachers, phase of learning team members, curriculum team leaders and school leaders through interviews held with reviewers.

- Operational plans in literacy and numeracy articulate very specific annual year level targets from Kindergarten to Year 6 using tools such as PM Benchmark Reading Assessment resources, Progressive Achievement Tests in vocabulary, and oral retell. Ongoing evaluation of the achievement levels of these targets with summative conclusions would be a very valuable resource for deeper school self-review.
- The school contracts some external personnel to provide analysis of performance data. These processes provide timely information in a format that can be quickly and easily shared and have proven to be useful, effective and efficient.
- While the self-review of student performance data is robust and ongoing, a broader school self-review of effectiveness and adherence to the DPA is currently not conducted. This is recommended to ensure the school board can validate overall school effectiveness and ensure compliance with agreement expectations.
- Sustainability of current effectiveness and continued improvement in school self-review processes are supported by many processes in place in the school. Examples of these include effective curriculum teams, regular and well-managed staff collaboration, student performance moderation with common assessment tasks and effective performance management processes.

Area of strength

- Regular use of formative assessment of student performance information is used effectively by teachers, curriculum and school leaders to develop responsive operational plans.

Areas for improvement

- Develop processes to monitor and report on the progress towards the achievement of business plan targets over time and include relevant information in the annual report.
- Develop a process for the school board to validate whole-school effectiveness and ensure adherence to the current DPA.

Program Delivery

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

Findings

- Secret Harbour Primary School has a calm, welcoming, orderly and professional atmosphere. Many parents and students commented that the school had the feeling of a small school with strong and positive connections to families and community. Student enrolment dropped in 2015 with Year 7 students moving to secondary school but enrolments have risen again to be at 2014 levels.
- School board members, parents and students commented on the positive leadership by the principal and members of the executive team and the dedication and professionalism of staff as key factors for the success of the school. The vision and direction of the school is clearly shared and well understood by all. Students interviewed stated that they felt safe, well supported to learn and well prepared for secondary school.
- The principal ensures 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*. Plans clearly demonstrate that the school has prepared well for the uptake of the Western Australian Curriculum and Assessment Outline, including the implementation of Indonesian as a language other than English from Year 1 to Year 6 since 2012. The use of the School Curriculum and Standards Authority scope and sequence documents and judging standards have ensured coherent curriculum delivery and clear understanding of expected standards.
- Whole-school approaches to the provision of effective feedback; goal setting; literacy and numeracy blocks; and programs such as guided reading, warm ups and lesson intentions have created common curriculum delivery approaches across the school. This has supported the development of a common language for both staff and students to discuss learning across all phases of development.
- Literacy, numeracy, and gifted and talented education are three curriculum focus areas led by teacher leaders under the guidance of the curriculum deputy principal. These teams display a high level of curriculum knowledge and expertise, critical reflection and evidence-based review. Teams also demonstrated a strong capacity to support colleagues to implement effective

teaching to meet the needs of their particular students. In 2018, it is planned to commence classroom observations using video techniques with associated mentoring and coaching to assist in reflection and review of classroom practice. A high number of staff have expressed interest in being involved, demonstrating a strong professional desire for improvement.

- School and teacher leaders are all actively involved in instructional leadership roles, modelling, discussing and clarifying expectations and ways of working with staff. This is a dynamic, energetic team that effectively energises and supports staff. Clarity of roles and expectations, regular debriefing and collaborative development enables this distributed leadership model to be very effective and valued by staff.
- Specialist teachers are employed in the areas of humanities and social sciences, science, physical education, music and languages other than English. These teachers have a high level of expertise in their subject area and all display passion and commitment to provide a stimulating and engaging curriculum to students from Year 1 to Year 6. Students commented that this breadth and depth of curriculum offerings was appreciated by them and made this school exciting and interesting.
- Staff display an active engagement in professional learning, collaborative discourse regarding educational research and the trialling of new approaches. One example of an innovative approach is The Listening Program (TLP) introduced by an occupational therapist to assist students to improve their auditory processing, enabling greater concentration and learning in the classroom environment. Another example is the recent introduction of trained Story Dogs to successfully stimulate and support reluctant readers.
- Pastoral care is well supported through a team that includes a learning support coordinator, teachers, special needs education assistants, school psychologists, a school chaplain and a defence support transition aide under the management of a deputy principal. A subcommittee led by a classroom teacher focuses on student wellbeing through the implementation of the KidsMatter program, which is now well embedded in the culture of the school. The school was awarded State winners in 2017 and was a finalist in 2014. These groups are very proactive, energetic and committed. They oversee a wide range of supportive programs and strategies to ensure that every child has the best chance to succeed. Support Through Resilience, Emotional wellbeing, Anxiety and Mindfulness Strategies (STREAMS) provides students with a platform to reconnect with other students. Case management approaches are well embedded in the school and a very comprehensive student tracking database has been developed to enable individual monitoring and intervention.

- Excursion advice papers are provided to staff organising student excursions and these ensure that sufficient preparation and risk management assessments are in place. Digital cyber safety and child protection programs and strategies are also taught to ensure students learn about personal safety, protection and resilience.
- Lunchtime programs, student clubs and activities before and after school provide students with an enriched curriculum. Parents and students both commented on the positive impact of these programs and the continued generosity of teachers and community members who enable such activities to be held.

Areas of strength

- Well-managed pastoral care committees provide a range of programs and strategies to support student health and wellbeing, many of which contain individualised case managed approaches.
- Balancing the implementation of coherent whole-school curriculum approaches as well as widening the curriculum to include many specialist teaching areas.
- Development of a positive and energetic distributed leadership model to support teachers and education assistants to continue to learn and grow professionally.

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

- Resources are allocated to meet business plan targets and strategy implementation, curriculum and operational priorities. Budgets are endorsed by the school board with reporting and monitoring carried out by the manager corporate services and leadership team. Discussions with staff affirmed access to budgets and the monitoring of progress.
- Student and school characteristic funding through the Student-Centred Funding Model is budgeted to meet specific student and program requirements. Board endorsement and expenditure as reported is ensuring that students benefit from the resources it provides.
- A key budget area aims to build staff capacity to improve teaching and learning. Leadership by the principal has ensured that all staff are able to participate in relevant professional learning opportunities to develop their skills and gain a greater understanding of education innovation and initiatives. This professional learning may include special course attendance, completing online modules, working with mentors/consultants and a variety of activities to meet individual needs.
- The workforce plan is functional with targets to meet current and future staffing needs, ensure continuity of educational delivery and in meeting community expectations. Key elements include staffing provision to meet curriculum requirements in language implementation; the school's focus on science, technology, engineering and mathematics; increasing staff diversity; supporting student mental health and wellbeing; and improving management and leadership effectiveness.
- The school has funded key programs to support student engagement and learning including a comprehensive student tracking system. In addition, a dedicated student services team provides programs (including STREAMS and TLP) and support for adjustments to be made for the learning programs of identified students. Due to the success of the TLP, it has also gained ongoing financial support by the Parents and Citizens Association (P&C).

- The reviewers affirm that the school's resources are appropriately planned and deployed to meet student and staff needs, fund programs to provide a challenging curriculum and meet the intent of the business plan.

Area of strength

- Leadership and staff for initiating, resourcing and managing programs to support the education and wellbeing of students.

School Board

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

Findings

- Board membership is representative of the school community and includes teacher and parent members with a wide range of expertise and skills. The board is compliant with the *School Education Act 1999* and *School Education Regulations 2000* which outline the requirements for membership categories and composition. At the time of the review, the board was undergoing a transition process with the appointment of a new board chair. In discussion, the reviewers affirm the intention by the new board chair to involve all members in a renewed focus on their roles in supporting the school into the next planning phase.
- Discussion with staff and parent representatives indicated that there was an understanding of their functions as prescribed in legislation. It was acknowledged that new members would require induction into developing their understanding.
- Evidence provided through board minutes and discussions with representatives indicated involvement in the functions as prescribed in the *School Education Act 1999*, *School Education Regulations 2000* and Department of Education policy.
- Board members attend major school events and family days. The newsletter contains information about the board functions and membership. The newsletter and minutes of board meetings can be accessed on the school's website.
- Board minutes and discussion with representatives confirmed that the board receives financial reports at each meeting; information on school audits and reviews; and data and analysis of school and student performance against targets. Information relevant to the school's self-review process and the IPS Review was included in the board's agenda.
- The board has reviewed its own performance in 2015 and, in light of the transition in 2018 with a new chair and parent members, plans to again review its own performance later this year.
- The board acknowledged in its minutes that school assessment data had been provided for discussion and feedback. The transition to new leadership and membership will include the opportunity to reassess the level of response to the performance of the school and students in meeting expectations. The board chair

indicated that the board needs to respond to the performance information and consider how it reports to the community.

- The reviewers were able to have extensive discussions with the new chair and the principal regarding sustainability of practice and membership.
- Practices were in place to ensure a full contingent of parent members and for a renewed focus on functions and the role of the board.

Areas for improvement

- Ensure the board approves the school annual report and provides information to the community about its response to school assessment data.
- Ensure that board members self-evaluate their own performance and they have access to relevant training.

Conclusion

The principal and staff of Secret Harbour Primary School have a continuing focus on supporting students in their learning. The school provides comprehensive and engaging programs designed to meet student needs.

Staff are led by a committed and forward-thinking principal and engage in professional learning, networking and goal setting to ensure that their practice is providing opportunities for all students to achieve their potential. Leadership development of staff is a feature of the distributive structure with staff given opportunities and support to lead in key curriculum and improvement areas. The use of evidence-based research in selecting strategies and approaches in improving academic and social outcomes is well embedded in practice.

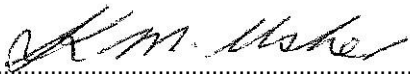
Leadership and staff have established a collaborative school culture inclusive of all students and staff and evidenced by the creation of a safe, positive and stimulating environment. Solid academic performance has been maintained in literacy and numeracy over time demonstrating continuing high progress when compared with like-schools.

The school board is engaged in processes to support the principal and staff in providing educational opportunities to benefit all students. Strong parent participation in an active P&C provides support to school events and contributes funding to school initiatives.

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 Secret Harbour Primary School, true and correct.

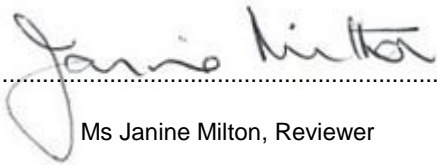
The principal and board chair have had an opportunity to comment on any matters of fact contained within this document.



Mrs Kerry Usher, Lead Reviewer

21 March 2018

Date



Ms Janine Milton, Reviewer

22 March 2018

Date



Mr Ken Perris, Director,
Independent Public School Review

27 March 2018

Date