



Department of
Education

GOVERNMENT OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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Harrisdale Senior High School

Public School Review

June 2021



PUBLIC SCHOOL REVIEW

Purpose

All Western Australian public schools are reviewed by the Department of Education's Public School Accountability directorate. A review gives assurance to the local community, the Minister for Education and Training and the Director General about the performance of public schools in delivering high quality education to its students. The review acknowledges the achievements of the school and gives feedback to support the Principal and staff with their improvement planning.

Initially conducted on a three-year cycle, subsequent reviews are determined to occur on a one, three or five-year timeframe.

The Principal provides the review team with a self-assessment of the school's performance based on evidence from the school. Information to be validated by the review team is considered before and during the school visit. This forms the basis for the school review report and determines when the next review will occur. The report is provided to the Principal, the Chair of the School Council/Board and the regional Director of Education.

Expectations of schools

The Statement of Expectation (Statement) makes clear and public the expectations and responsibilities of schools and the Department in student achievement and progress.

The Statement is between; the Department of Education, represented by the Director General; the school, represented by the Principal; and is noted by the school council/board, represented by the Chair.

The Statement sets out the expectations of Principals in relation to the delivery of the 2020-2024 strategic directions *Every student, every classroom, every day*, and *Building on Strength*.

The Statement will underpin each school's strategic planning and self-assessment and will form part of the school's Public School Review, as well as the Professional Performance Review of the Principal.

Public School Review – The Standard

A Standard has been developed across the domains of the School Improvement and Accountability Framework to describe essential indicators of performance. The selection of the indicators is based on literature research and historical reviews of school performance in Western Australian public schools.

The purpose is to better ensure that judgements about student performance are standardised and objective. Indicators describe what is evident in schools functioning 'as expected' within each domain.

The Standard defines the expected level of school performance. Judgements are made in relation to the Standard. External validation is also based on evidence presented relating to the Standard.



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Context

Harrisdale Senior High School opened in 2017 as an Independent Public School and was a timely addition to the growing community. The school is approximately 26 kilometres south of the Perth central business district, in the South Metropolitan Education Region.

The school commenced with a single cohort of Year 7 students and has increased by an additional year group each subsequent year. By 2022, the school will accommodate students from Year 7 to Year 12. Currently, there are 1631 students enrolled from Year 7 to Year 11.

The school has an Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage of 1041 (decile 3).

The second and final stage of construction of the school was completed in early 2020. A range of specialised facilities are available to students, including art and media studios, a performing arts theatre and a lecture theatre.

The School Board provides assistance to the school by way of strategic guidance. A dedicated Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) is active in raising funds through a variety of events.

School self-assessment validation

The Principal submitted a comprehensive school self-assessment.

The following aspects of the school's self-assessment process are confirmed:

- Leaders described a culture of continuous planning and review and a 'present tense' view informing school decision making.
- Staff engaged in a process that identified relevant information and evidence for the review of each domain of the School Improvement and Accountability Framework.
- The Electronic School Assessment Tool (ESAT) submission provided a snapshot of the school's performance within each domain, which was enhanced through conversations during the validation visit.
- A collection of staff comments within each domain provided reviewers insight into their reflections and the journey of the school since its opening in 2017.
- A significant number of staff, students, parents and community partners participated in conversation throughout the validation visit. Each demonstrated a good understanding of the school's ESAT self-assessment submission.

The following recommendation is made:

- Consider using the ESAT to affirm progress against the Standard as part of the school's ongoing self-assessment processes.

Public School Review

Relationships and partnerships

Positive relationships and mutually beneficial partnerships are enhancing the learning experience for students.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Considerable effort in building external partnerships is providing benefit beyond expectations for a newly formed school.
- A strong culture of collaboration between staff is underpinned by mutual respect and a collective commitment to student success and the school vision.
- Parents and the local community have and continue to play a significant role in shaping the foundations to become a school of excellence in learning and teaching.
- There is consistent messaging with the school community, ensuring the vision is deeply penetrated at every level. A number of communication platforms including 'School TV' support parents to engage with their child/ren's learning.
- A strong and supportive School Board advocate for the school and actively engage in its strategic direction and governance. An enthusiastic P&C actively promotes the school in the community.
- Responsive to the needs of students and their families, the school has an extensive 'Clubs' program, with staff providing students with out of school hours opportunities not typically available in a new community.
- The school is continuing to build on the extensive partnerships that currently support the learning experience for students.

Learning environment

Significant attention has been paid to establishing a positive, safe and inclusive school culture where excellence in learning and teaching can thrive.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Extensive transition processes ensure the school has a deep understanding of the learning and wellbeing needs of every student. Each student is supported by a homeroom teacher, with the intention that the teacher remains with them throughout their secondary schooling journey.
- A robust and well-planned homeroom structure provides explicit teaching of the 'Harrisdale Way', pathway planning, ongoing development of individual portfolios and setting of learning goals.
- Students have the opportunity to engage in a broad co-curricular 'Clubs' program during break times and out of school hours. Students are encouraged and supported to take on leadership roles within their club.
- Student voice is encouraged and acted upon through the mechanisms of the Student Council and annual Tell Them From Me surveys.
- The school is continuing to progress the important work of the Reconciliation Action Plan Committee.

Leadership

School leaders actively promote the shared moral purpose to improve students' lives through learning and achievement, resulting in strong coherence between staff approaches and the strategic direction of the school.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The school vision guides all decisions and actions, with nothing left to chance in planning for continual improvement.
- Staff understand and embrace the core values required to enact the vision.
- Strong instructional leadership is driving consistency of practice in every classroom. Pedagogy is evidence based, introduced through external experts building capacity of internal coaches to embed practice.
- Opportunities to lead are encouraged and supported. Strong distributed leadership is evident across the school, ensuring highly invested staff drive school initiatives collaboratively. Layers of leadership exist to support learning and teaching.
- A culture of classroom observation and feedback drives professional growth, with instructional leaders, line managers, the transition support coordinator and school leaders having consistency of process.
- The Principal and associate principals are highly visible in the school. Regular classroom walkthroughs keep them attuned to the tone of the school and connected with staff and students.

Use of resources

As evident in all domains of the School Improvement and Accountability Framework, the school vision and strategic plans provide the foundation for the alignment of finance and resource decisions.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Clear financial process and practices comply with the expectations of the Funding Agreement for Schools, overseen by the Finance Committee and School Board.
- Particular attention to ensuring accuracy of projected enrolments results in 100 per cent accuracy in student census verification each year.
- Resources are allocated to support school priorities, with significant funds enabling excellence in learning and teaching.
- Workforce planning is fluid and managed strategically, responsive to the current needs of the school. This is particularly evident in staff recruitment and the creation of new roles.
- The school has state-of-the-art resources that enhance the learning opportunities for students. These include resources in ICT¹, science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), music, and a film and sound recording studio.
- Student characteristics and targeted initiatives funding is directed to support the students for which it is intended, whilst enhancing learning for other students requiring support through its prudent use. The school's resource allocation reflects targeted flexibility when required.

Teaching quality

A focus on the quality of teaching underpins the operations and strategic direction of the school. All staff understand, and are committed to, the school's Teaching and Learning Framework.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Explicit Direct Instruction (EDI) pedagogy guides practice across the school. Staff are recruited and supported with this expectation front of mind.
- Differentiation is built into the EDI process for students requiring additional layers of support in their learning. Extension and intervention programs differentiate further for identified students.
- Staff use a wide range of student data in planning, delivery and review of teaching programs. NAPLAN², Online Literacy and Numeracy Assessment (OLNA) and teacher judgements are used to develop student data profiles that inform teaching.
- Parents are informed of student progress and achievement in a number of ways, including: letters of commendation or concern; staff/parent emails; phone calls; parent-teacher interview evenings; and case conferencing. These provide families with ongoing communication beyond the formal reporting process.
- Teachers are supported by internal learning area expertise in Special Educational Need planning and reporting for identified students.
- Professional learning aligned to school priorities, is comprehensive and promoted by the structures and supports that exist for professional growth, including EDI coaching, staff induction and graduate teacher programs.

Student achievement and progress

As a new secondary school, Harrisdale Senior High School is engaging in the longer-term process of establishing exemplary standards of academic performance. At present, the school does not have longitudinal data to validate student achievement and progress, although preliminary indicators that the school is value adding to student achievement and progress, are promising.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Individual student profiles are created each year for incoming Year 7 students, providing valuable data for teaching programs, ongoing monitoring and pathway planning.
- My School NAPLAN performance and progress reports show stronger progress than that of students from statistically similar backgrounds and the same starting scores in Australia.
- Year 10 2021 OLNA results are above the overall average of like schools' OLNA student achievement.
- Expert and experienced teachers have been recruited to teach Australian Tertiary Admission Rank courses, and heads of department are strengthening curriculum in all learning areas.
- Moderation processes within the school, and with partner schools, are supporting assessment and grade alignment.
- A strong Vocational Education and Training program including Certificate IV courses is engaging students in Year 11.
- Rigorous counselling and individual pathway planning is supporting student choice in course selection.
- The school has an unrelenting focus on student achievement and school success.

Reviewers

Vicki McKeown
Director, Public School Review

James Kent
Principal, Churchlands Senior High School
Peer Reviewer

Endorsement

Based on this report, I endorse the commendations made by the review team regarding your school's performance.

Your next school review is scheduled for Term 2, 2024.



Melesha Sands
Deputy Director General, Schools

References

- 1 Information and communications technology
- 2 National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy