



Department of
Education

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Public education
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Yule Brook College

Public School Review

July 2019

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

Yule Brook College is situated approximately 20 kilometres south-east of the Perth central business district in the South Metropolitan Education Region suburb of Maddington. The College is a small, middle school that specialises in using the Big Picture Education design. Commencing in 2016, the school has recently completed the three-year Fogarty EDvance Improvement program.

Yule Brook College has an Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage rating of 843. It currently enrolls 292 students from Year 7 to Year 10.

Approximately 38 per cent of students are Aboriginal, and the school has a long history of partnerships with organisations including Clontarf, the Wirrpanda Foundation, Follow the Dream and Carey Mining. The relatively new Deadly Sista Girlz program has increased enrolment of Aboriginal girls and is impacting positively on a gender balance issue in the school.

The College became an Independent Public School in 2012 and the School Board includes representation from the local community, parents and staff.

School self-assessment validation

The Principal submitted a comprehensive and rigorous school self-assessment.

The following aspects are confirmed:

- The school's leadership team actively engaged in compiling the ESAT¹ submission.
- The self-assessment submission provided an open, honest and transparent account of the current school context.
- Staff, students, parents and community members actively engaged in the school validation visit.
- Staff demonstrated a shared ownership for student success and a sound knowledge of current levels of achievement and progress.
- There was clear alignment between the performance evidence, judgements about priorities and planned intentions at the strategic level.
- Leaders acknowledged the need to ensure clear links exist between areas identified for improvement in the Business Plan and the school's strategic and operational plans, to raise the standards of student achievement.
- A culture of reflection and continuous improvement was evident.

The following recommendations are made:

- Develop clear links between current progress, areas identified for improvement, target setting and related planning at the classroom operational level.
- Be selective about what to include in the ESAT, avoiding repetition.

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Relationships and partnerships	
<p>Building and maintaining quality relationships sits at the core of the school's ethos. Parents express high praise for the school's leadership and staff. They acknowledge the value-adding provided through a culture of genuine care and compassion. Staff morale is high.</p>	
Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The School Board is well informed and committed to the College. Board members actively advocate for the school. • Staff embrace the ethos of 'one student at a time in a community of learners' and seek grants to fund special programs and initiatives that have resulted in improved learning opportunities for the students. • A wide range of quality, authentic partnerships with business, community groups and educational organisations impacts positively on the school. • A high level of parent engagement is fostered through exhibitions and these acknowledge parents as key stakeholders in their children's education.
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen the capacity of the School Board and its contribution to the school improvement agenda by actively encouraging members to engage in Department training. • Continue to seek more parent and/or community members to join the School Board.

Learning environment	
<p>The Big Picture Education design seeks to ensure a career path of relevance for every student. Aspirational goals regarding engagement in internships and partnerships with key agencies work to engage students through identifying and fostering their personal passions.</p>	
Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advisory classes serve to set a positive tone through explicit teaching of the school's behaviour expectations and mindfulness skills. • Co-located onsite, SSEN:B&E² supports the effective implementation of a positive behaviour policy. Professional learning for staff coupled with targeted interventions for SAER³ result in a shared understanding and whole-school approach. • A detailed attendance strategy is well supported by agencies such as Clontarf and Deadly Sista Girlz coordinators. • Whilst data suggests that behaviour remains a concern, this is restricted to a small group of SAER and is not indicative of the general school climate.
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work to alter student perceptions regarding behaviour management by ensuring all are informed about the strategies employed with SAER. • Consider expanding upon the 'be prepared, be here, be productive, be nice' expectations to incorporate explicit understandings of how these optimise targeted goal setting.

Leadership

A shared commitment to broadening the world view of students underpins the school's direction. The leadership actively engage in rigorous reflection and strategic change management. Actions in response to the Fogarty EDvance initiative is evidence of this.

Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A culture of trust and respect exists, both of and within the school's leadership team. • New initiatives, such as mindfulness, are supported by expert training, the provision of quality programs, time allocation and a shared commitment. • The 'Advisory for Advisors' mentor initiative contributes to an effective distributed leadership structure and develops aspirant leaders. • A comprehensive Aboriginal school community agreement, shared by staff, parents, students and the wider community, serves to honour the past whilst embracing the ACSF⁴ and continued plans for improvement. • The Business Plan articulates clear goals and is aligned to relevant key performance indicators which are aspirational and incremental over the life of the plan.
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to foster a school-wide focus on improvement by establishing documented operational plans that articulate specific interventions for teachers to undertake, aligned to the key performance indicators. • Expand upon the 'Advisory for Advisors' initiative to foster a culture of professional learning communities aligned to the Big Picture ethos.

Use of resources

The Big Picture Education design privileges human agency. Consequently, the combination of smaller class sizes and the employment of additional support staff results in a tight cash position, but is managed well. School funds are supplemented by grant applications and donations from partnership arrangements. Facility management support is sought proactively through the Department.

Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student characteristic and targeted initiative funding are employed strategically to support evidence-based initiatives aligned to the school's planning. The Board understand and endorse this approach. • Astute management of ICT⁵, including short and long-term planning, ensures appropriate accessibility for staff and students. • The workforce plan reflects careful thought and planning for sustainability of knowledge and expertise. • The Manager Corporate Services ensures that expectations of cost centre managers are clear and provides individualised training on a needs basis. • Finance Committee operations are transparent and system compliant.
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that financial and human resource planning is incorporated into the classroom level operational plans, as they are constructed.

Teaching quality

<p>Staff are data literate and make informed judgements to differentiate learning. Pursuit of academic rigour is a core school principle. The reality of being a small middle school often results in teachers teaching outside of their area of trained expertise.</p>	
Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers express their commitment to the school and a willingness to continually reflect upon and improve their practice. Classroom observation guidelines are comprehensive and allow for a variety of approaches. • Access to Makerspace and the Indi-GENIUS Innovative Partnership Schools Project provide quality opportunities for a STEAM⁶-based approach to teaching and learning which embeds ICT. • The 'Advisory for Advisors' initiative offers a personalised leadership development structure that is valued highly by the participants. • A whole-school approach to literacy is embedded in Advisory classes and individualised interventions are implemented for identified SAER.
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to seek greater consistency of grading in alignment with the SCSA⁷ judging standards through common teacher practice, accessing TDS⁸ support and moderation within and across schools. • Reinvigorate the practice of classroom observation as a recognised reflective strategy. • Seek alignment between Advisory learning plans and the WAC⁹ to ensure that students have access to the full spectrum of learning areas. • Pursue the implementation of Noongar language into the curriculum.

Student achievement and progress

<p>Achievement and progress is considered within a broader framework of student wellbeing and the Big Picture learning goals which align to the general capabilities of the WAC.</p>	
Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The high transiency rate makes comparative data analysis less beneficial but individual tracking of students with NAPLAN¹⁰ and OLNA¹¹ data occurs. • The school recognises a need to focus on literacy and numeracy, and plan to audit the effectiveness of Sounds-Write, a new initiative, later this year. • Streamed classes and the use of pathway grades allow for differentiation of the curriculum at class level. • The leadership team recognises the need to engage in moderation to ensure that teacher judgements align with the SCSA judging standards.
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue the planned creation and implementation of a whole-school numeracy strategy. • Consider accessing tools such as Best Performance CNAP¹² to support quality data analysis and strategic intervention.

Reviewers

Kath Ward
Director, Public School Review

Susan Kerr
Principal, Newton Moore Senior High School
Peer Reviewer

Endorsement

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

Your next school review is scheduled for 2022.



Stephen Baxter
A/Deputy Director General, Schools

References

- 1 Electronic School Assessment Tool
- 2 School of Special Educational Needs: Behaviour and Engagement
- 3 Students at educational risk
- 4 Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework
- 5 Information and communication technology
- 6 Science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics
- 7 School Curriculum and Standards Authority
- 8 Teacher Development School
- 9 Western Australian Curriculum
- 10 National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy
- 11 Online Literacy and Numeracy Assessment
- 12 Customised NAPLAN Analysis Platform