



Department of
Education

Shaping the future

Balcatta Primary School

Public School Review

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 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 3 year cycle, subsequent reviews are determined to occur on a one, 3 or 5 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 Public School Review report and determines when the next review will occur. The report is provided to the Principal and the regional Director of Education.

Expectations of schools

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

The Statement is between; the Department, 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. It will also support the Principal Professional Review.

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.

For further information or resources in alternative formats for people with accessibility needs, please contact PublicSchoolAccountability.PublicSchoolReview@education.wa.edu.au

Context

Balcatta Primary School is located approximately 10 kilometres from the Perth central business district, within the North Metropolitan Education Region.

Opened in 1964, Balcatta Primary School became an Independent Public School in 2020.

Currently, 292 students are enrolled from Kindergarten to Year 6. Balcatta Primary School has an Index of Community and Socio-Educational Advantage of 1062 (decile 2).

The school is supported by the School Board and the Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C).

The first Public School Review (PSR) of Balcatta Primary School was conducted in Term 2, 2021. This 2025 PSR report provides a current point of reference for the school's next cycle of school improvement.

School self-assessment validation

The Principal submitted a school self-assessment that provided an overview of the school's operations.

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

- The Electronic School Assessment tool (ESAT) submission provided an outline of the school context, with some alignment between the evidence, analysis and future planned actions.
- The newly appointed Principal astutely recognised the expertise and capacity of the long-serving deputy principal to take a lead role in the school's self-assessment preparations. This resulted in an ESAT submission that gave voice to the school's context and journey.
- A highlight of the ESAT submission was the school performance review for each domain undertaken by the student leadership team. This was delivered at the commencement of the day providing the reviewers with an insight into school performance through the lens of students.
- A range of staff, students, P&C and School Board members engaged enthusiastically during the validation visit contributing to discussions and elaborating on evidence provided, adding significant value to the ESAT submission.

The following recommendations are made:

- In future ESAT submissions, review entries to ensure a succinct and relevant collection of quality evidence to describe the essential indicators of performance, as outlined in the Standard and guided by the domain foci.
- Establish ongoing processes for whole-staff collaboration in the analysis of data to inform school self-assessment and improvement processes.
- Maintain a focus on the Standard as a constant reference point for ongoing performance reflection articulating to staff the purpose of self-assessment and its significance in supporting school-wide improvement.

Relationships and partnerships

Staff value and understand the benefits of partnering with families and the impact of their contributions to the learning experience. The importance of building positive and caring relationships is a feature of the school's drive for improvement.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Creating traditions such as Acknowledgement of Country and the Moorditj Award, together with the Blanket Activity for students and staff and partnerships with local artists and Aboriginal Elders, is building connection and relationships with the Aboriginal community.
- A range of established partnerships, including with external agencies, volunteers, secondary schools and network schools, provide enriched learning opportunities for students and valuable professional learning (PL) and networking for staff.
- Building professional collegiate relationships between staff is emerging through developing communication processes and collaborative structures inclusive of staff norms, while frequent social events bring staff together.
- Engaged members of the School Board and P&C work collaboratively in their advocacy for the school and the community providing oversight of governance and fostering a sense of community and connection.
- Student relationships are strengthened through the provision of opportunities to have input into the planning of school events and feedback regarding learning and the environment.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Develop communication guidelines to ensure consistency across all phases of school and families are provided information that is focused on student learning.
- Continue to provide PL, and develop processes and structures, to build staff confidence and skills to positively communicate and establish respectful, productive professional relationships.

Learning environment

Guided by Positive Behaviour Support and the RISE¹ values, the school has established an environment that is safe, engaging and supportive, setting the pre-conditions for students to thrive.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The establishment of a cross-curriculum team, development of an integrated cross-curriculum schedule and recognition of cultural events is contributing to a more culturally responsive and engaging environment that is inclusive and welcoming for all.
- The school implements a range of whole-school and targeted social-emotional learning programs that effectively equip students with skills to manage emotions, navigate social challenges and stay safe. Wellbeing data is used to identify support needs, and the wellness room provides a positive support mechanism for neurodiverse students.
- Heightened rigour in data analysis processes is providing greater accuracy in the identification and planning for SAER², and support is provided to meet students' needs with skilled allied professionals, an education assistant lead, and staff PL, including Autism Awareness Australia and Team Teach.
- Staff are well supported by the deputy principal in developing their understanding of the use of the EALD³ Progress Map to plan, monitor and track progress and achievement of students learning with EALD.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Progress the development of an appropriate scaffolded instructional model to ensure a unified low variance approach that reduces students' cognitive load and embeds predictable structures and routines.
- Provide ongoing support to embedding, with fidelity, the positive behaviour strategy to ensure consistency of language and approach is taken by all staff in its implementation.

Leadership

The newly appointed Principal has prioritised building relationships founded on trust to lead a collaborative and consultative school improvement agenda. Understanding that the greatest impact on student outcomes is quality teaching, there is a commitment to providing opportunities for staff to lead teaching and learning.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The implementation of change is undertaken consultatively. Collaborative structures are a conduit for staff to actively drive change and participate in school planning, provide feedback and work collaboratively.
- A keen focus is given to supporting staff on their career journey. Opportunities to undertake acting positions and for staff to present PL in areas of interest, knowledge and skill are actively accessed by staff.
- There is cohesion between the business and operational plans and their focus on the Western Australian Curriculum that supports consistency of content delivery across the phases of schooling and a means of monitoring content delivery.
- Expectations are clearly articulated, modelled and scaffolded for staff understanding through the Staff Norms 2025 and Code of Conduct documents. Regular review, when staff changes occur, ensures it remains relevant and valued by staff.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Develop a broad reaching instructional leadership model that includes building leaders' capacity to support staff to embed consistent whole-school processes and programs, with fidelity, into classroom practice.
- Provide opportunities to build all levels of leadership capability through the provision of targeted PL and scaffolded, monitored support in the performance of their role.

Use of resources

Financial management compliance with the Funding Agreement for Schools, underpins the expectation that schools deploy resources to create and sustain the conditions for student success. The school has recognised that this is an ongoing area for improvement.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Prudent decision making in the allocation of student characteristics funding, ensures those identified with additional learning needs are well-supported. This includes the strategic scheduling of education assistants to deliver intervention programs and provide valued support in every classroom.
- The recent move to RM Finance and increased use of electronic banking has significantly improved financial processes and procedures.
- Comprehensive audits of reading and mathematics resources to assess quality, relevance and alignment with the curriculum has resulted in greater alignment to the curriculum and school priorities.
- The school actively seeks additional income streams and support for students enabling them to offer a wide range of educational experiences, enhancing the learning opportunities for students.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Refine the workforce plan, with an emphasis on forecasting required staff capabilities, succession planning and aligning PL with the school's priorities, recommendations of this PSR report, and student needs.
- Continue to develop the financial literacy and responsibilities of staff in relation to school resourcing to ensure they understand the compliance and obligations of the Financial Management Act.
- Allocate resourcing to facilitate a distributed instructional leadership model embedding collaborative structures to drive instructional leadership and foster consistent phase of learning team engagement.
- Develop a policy and procedure, inclusive of selection process, tenure and roles and responsibilities, to facilitate the formation of a Finance Committee that includes broad representation of staff.

Teaching quality

There is a collective belief by staff, that for children to succeed, a holistic approach that considers the whole-child must be prioritised. With high expectations of themselves, staff exhibit a deep sense of commitment and a strong belief that they can, and do, make a difference to every child at the school.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Catering for composite and specialist classes, well-constructed collaborative structures are cultivating connected low-variance practice providing teachers designated time to share, plan and moderate assessments.
- Professional learning (PL) is targeted to build the capacity of staff to implement the whole-school programs and priorities. Induction processes for new staff prioritises PL, ensuring they understand and have the capacity to implement the whole-school programs and processes.
- Opportunities to engage in moderation have increased since the introduction of Brightpath Writing resulting in growing levels of teacher confidence that judgements and grade alignment are accurate and comparable to like schools.
- A scaffolded early years Phonics program, consisting of pedagogical framework, scope and sequence and assessment checklist, provides teachers with guidance and is promoting consistency of implementation.
- Teachers recognise the diversity of their students and cater for their needs through Special Educational Needs planning, the EALD Progress Map, and specialist learning subjects. Embedded in whole-school processes, the Balcatta Primary School - Forever Upwards, Principles of Teaching and Learning (Birds), guides planning and intervention to differentiate the curriculum and learning environment.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Continue the development and implementation of the school-wide instructional model, ensuring alignment with the Quality Teaching Strategy and creating clear links between practice across learning areas.
- Embed an agreed classroom observation and feedback model to provide teachers with ongoing targeted support in the implementation of the agreed pedagogy and instructional model across the school.
- Continue to monitor closely the effectiveness and impact of collaborative release planning and PLC⁴ meetings on consistency of instructional practice and student achievement and progress.

Student achievement and progress

A growing awareness of the role that data has in reviewing performance, is emerging. This is resulting in a greater focus by staff on the analysis and use of system and school-based data to track student progress and achievement.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The assessment schedule clearly outlines the data to be collected and when. Communications such as the 'Balcatta Bell' ensures the scheduled timeline of data collection requirements are known by staff and factored into collaborative release time.
- The introduction of Brightpath Writing is building staff's ability to use data to inform planning. Staff value the high-quality data and teaching points this platform provides.
- Focused attention on accurately collecting student achievement and progress data to track program effectiveness facilitates evidence-based decisions as evidenced in a hands-on approach to mathematics and implementation of synthetic phonics, Heggerty Phonemic Awareness and Early Literacy programs.
- Students are well prepared for NAPLAN⁵ and PAT⁶ assessments. This is strengthening the outcomes of EALD students in their ability to access the tests and a contributor to the sustained Years 3 and 5 NAPLAN above that of like schools for all assessed areas and Year 1 to 6 PAT Reading, Grammar and Punctuation and Maths above the Australian mean.

Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Provide in data analysis and disciplined dialogue to promote the data literacy of teaching staff.

Reviewers	
Maxine Augustson Director, Public School Review	Cameron Lindley Principal, Carlisle Primary School Peer Reviewer

Endorsement

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

The next review process focusing on the use of resources domain only, is scheduled for Term 2, 2026. You will be formally notified in the 2 terms leading up to your school's scheduled follow up review.

Should the school meet the Standard for these domains, a full Public School Review, inclusive of all domains, will be scheduled for 2028.



Steven Watson
Deputy Director General, Schools

References

- 1 Respect, Include, Strive, Explore
- 2 Students at educational risk
- 3 English as an additional language or dialect
- 4 Professional learning community
- 5 National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy
- 6 Progressive Achievement Tests