Department of Education
GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Shaping the future

Merredin College

Public School Review

D25/1129175
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Public School Review

Purpose

All Western Australian public schools are reviewed by the Department of Education's School and Principal Review directorate. A review gives assurance to the local community, the Minister for Education 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 PublicSchoolReview@education.wa.edu.au

Context

Merredin College is situated approximately 250 kilometres east of Perth and is located within the Wheatbelt Education Region.

Following the amalgamation of North Merredin Primary School, South Merredin Primary School and Merredin Senior High School, Merredin College commenced in 2012.

There are currently 542 students enrolled from Kindergarten to Year 12.

Merredin College gained Independent Public School status in 2017.

The school has an Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage of 920 (decile 9).

The school is supported by an active Parent and Citizens' Association (P&C) and School Board.

The first Public School Review of Merredin College was conducted in Term 3, 2021. This 2025 Public School Review report provides a current point of reference for the next cycle of school improvement.

School self-assessment validation

The Principal submitted a transparent and reflective school self-assessment.

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

- The Principal has a strong understanding of self-assessment processes. A rigorous improvement agenda is being driven through engagement in self-assessment and consultation, with the objective of developing unity of purpose.
- The executive team viewed the Public School Review as an opportunity to re-establish a strong and united culture reflective of the values of the leadership team and mirror their respective skill sets.
- Self-assessment processes conducted in preparation for the Public School Review supported the aspiration of improving the collective efficacy of staff and the implementation of consistent and connected whole-of-college practices.
- The Electronic School Assessment Tool (ESAT) submission provided a transparent account of improvement against the Standard and the domain foci. Domain overviews framed structured statements of impact and provided evidence that supported the judgements made about the college's progress.
- Authentic reflections were a feature of the ESAT submission, demonstrating thoughtful inquiry. Alignment between performance evidence, judgements about priorities and planning for future improvement was evident.
- A broad range of staff and students provided insightful contributions during discussions held with the reviewers during the validation visit, providing transparent reflections in support of the college's self-assessment.
- Committed and passionate School Board and P&C members, parents and community partners contributed open and honest perspectives. They described their individual and collective aspirations for the college, adding value to the validation process.

The following recommendation is made:

- To develop an evidence-based decision making ethos, introduce robust data analysis techniques that enhance data interpretation including the identification of patterns and trends in student and school performance.

Relationships and partnerships

With a deliberate focus on building a collaborative culture, staff voice is valued and prompts rigorous discussion, and analysis of feedback generates strategies and action to support improvement.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- There is a focus on developing a culture of shared responsibility and collaboration centred upon the college's strategic direction. The Principal works intentionally and diligently to shift perceptions and strengthen collaboration, acknowledging that cultural change requires united and sustained effort.
- Leveraging the advantages of primary and secondary teams of staff and fostering greater levels of collaboration across the college is a priority. This approach aims to optimise the conditions for college improvement and, in turn, student success.
- Highly valued and communally beneficial educational partnerships support individual student pathways, while also adding value to operational and strategic improvement initiatives. In conjunction with Central Regional TAFE[1], purposeful projects support students completing onsite certificates to improve school facilities.
- The dynamic and proactive P&C maintain a strong focus on community connections and facilitating successful fundraising events to deliver additional funds to the college, adding value to the learning environment for students.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Actively promote and raise the profile of the college as a recognised and respected school of choice, considering the benefits of increased visibility in, and collaboration with, the community to re-establish trust and credibility.
- Proceed as intended with the establishment of communication protocols to support efficient and timely communications within the college and with community partners.

Learning environment

The commitment of staff to the whole child underpins the dedication to the provision of a positive and respectful environment for students, with an emphasis on providing a balance between academic expectations, wellbeing and social development.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The college is alert to the importance of responding to the social and emotional wellbeing needs of students. Underpinned by genuine care and the best interests of students, staff proactively establish the conditions for students to thrive in safe, caring and inclusive classroom environments.
- A reignited commitment to the implementation of a consistent Positive Behaviour Support approach, including the development of a whole-of-college matrix, explicit teaching of behaviour and the introduction of house coordinators, has contributed to a calmer learning environment and smoother transitions. This is supported by aligned reward activities, including GROW[2] acknowledgements.
- Student leaders are invested in the college and see their role as contributing positively to the culture and the experiences of the student population.
- Education assistants are skilled, trusted colleagues and are provided with a degree of autonomy in the delivery of individual student support. Teachers and education assistants have forged effective partnerships demonstrating mutual respect for each other's knowledge and skills.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Implement a multi-tiered system of supports framework to strengthen the coordination of individual and targeted support for students.
- Consolidate Positive Behaviour Support as a component of the multi-tiered system of supports, informed by data collection and progress tracking.

Leadership

The college's leadership is taking intentional steps to develop a cohesive, collaborative and accountable culture in which staff are empowered, communication is transparent and instructional leadership is prioritised.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Leadership development is strategic and purposeful. A multi-tiered approach supports aspirant leadership, develops internal capacity and promotes a shared responsibility for improvement.
- The evolution of purposeful alignment between structures and processes fortifies planning and decision making. This is evident in the articulation of the college's focus on targeting aspirational improvement.
- Initiatives, such as the introduction of improvement teams, empower staff and provide aspirants with avenues to expand their expertise, drive meaningful change and enhance instructional practices. The autonomy provided to staff within this structure fosters professional growth and instructional improvement.
- The college's leadership recognises the need to develop instructional leadership capacity across the college to support consistent and connected practice in all classrooms. Structures reflect a shared model that will support the implementation of whole-of-college strategies to deliver on the college's strategic intent.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Articulate the college's improvement agenda to all staff and the wider community and develop annual operational expectations to provide clarity and accountability for staff, ensuring a united and shared understanding of the strategic direction.
- Build the instructional leadership capacity of middle leaders to ensure the implementation of consistent and connected practice across the college, aligned to the Quality Teaching Strategy.

Use of resources

The introduction of disciplined forward planning and evidence-based decision making underpins the college's approach to financial management, resource allocation and workforce planning.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The establishment of new systems and processes ensure resources are allocated in a transparent and purposeful manner. Accountability is expected and evidenced by a disciplined approach to improvement, demonstrating the formulation of links between college priorities, planning and budgeting.
- Financial and workforce priorities are strategically and skilfully managed by the manager corporate services, ensuring college resourcing and facility management is executed with agility to adapt and adjust to enrolment fluctuations and additional student needs.
- Annual budgeting processes are evidence-based, consultative and allow staff the ability to apply for funding aligned to college priorities, with requests fairly and equitably overseen and approved by the Finance Committee and endorsed by the School Board.
- Funding for students with diagnosed disabilities supports the employment of a learning support coordinator and education assistants, providing targeted support for the growing number of students with identified social, emotional and academic needs.
- Effective device management, evidenced by a tiered plan for information and communications technology, ensures access to reliable and contemporary technology for staff. The introduction of the bring your own device program provides student access to technology and is complemented by the provision of laptops at the point of need.

Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Implement data collection measures to monitor and evaluate the impact of resource allocation on student achievement and progress.

Teaching quality

The college acknowledges the critical importance of implementing whole-of-college approaches, with a focus on consistent and connected teaching practices, integrated with targeted intervention programs, to support student achievement.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The college has undertaken processes to review and refine course and assessment outlines to ensure alignment with the Western Australian Curriculum. This work has ensured teaching programs are clearly sequenced, assessment practices are transparent, and curriculum delivery reflects current expectations.
- Staff participation in professional learning to extend their knowledge and promote evidence-based, high impact teaching strategies is prioritised. The intended introduction of an instructional model will support greater alignment across learning areas and enhance whole-of college collaboration.
- Supported triangulation of student data using the Elastik platform is developing staff capacity to track individual and cohort performance across On-Entry assessment, PAT[3], NAPLAN[4] and OLNA[5] data sets. Targeted student placement, accurate identification of learning gaps and purposeful tracking and monitoring of student achievement is developing in pockets.
- Staff understanding of differentiation is evident. Individual education plans, targeted programs such as Elevate Education and support from the regional learning specialists and skilled education assistants ensures student learning is focused on individual academic levels.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Proceed with the launch of the Ready, Instruct, Student Engagement, Evaluate (RISE) instructional model. This should be supported by professional learning to ensure the implementation of predictable routines and consistent, connected instructional strategies in every classroom.
- Facilitate staff collaboration to support a shared understanding of the Western Australian Curriculum and further review existing practices to ensure alignment.

Student achievement and progress

The college is committed to prioritising the development of staff data literacy, routine whole-of-college expectations for data collection and analysis, and evidence-based decision making.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The college recognises the need to be responsive to longitudinal student achievement and progress data and is committed to the implementation of data-informed, explicit teaching and learning to address gaps in the learning of students.
- Recognising the importance of early identification and intervention, the Telethon Speech and Hearing partnership successfully supports the proactive identification of students' learning and developmental needs, while also taking steps to investigate and introduce additional intervention measures.
- A dedicated approach and applied support strategies are positively impacting OLNA pre-qualification data, and it is recognised there is scope for further intervention planning and proactive action in Years 7 to 9 to further increase rates and maintain achievement above that of like schools.
- Collaboration with families to understand student achievement data and support individual student pathways to success is recognised as a priority.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Develop the data literacy of all staff to identify student learning gaps, implement targeted interventions, and evaluate the impact of programs and instructional approaches on student achievement and progress.
- Introduce a clearly defined whole-of-college data review model to drive collective efficacy.

Reviewers	
Kate Wilson **Director, Public School Review**	Leanne Prior **Principal, Mount Barker Community College** **Peer Reviewer**

Endorsement

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

You will receive formal notification in the 2 terms leading up to your school's next scheduled review. This notification will be provided in 2028.

Steve Watson
Deputy Director General, Schools

References

1 Technical and Further Education
2 We are caring, We are respectful, We are responsible, We strive to succeed
3 Progressive Achievement Tests
4 National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy
5 Online Literacy and Numeracy