



Government of Western Australia  
Department of Education

# Jarrahdale Primary School

2018

Review Findings



Independent Public School Review

## **Disclaimer**

This document reports the findings of the review of Jarrahdale Primary School.

The Department of Education does not endorse any commercial organisation, product or service mentioned in this report.

The Department of Education can only guarantee the authenticity of original documents. This document is uncontrolled once printed.

*To help people with disabilities obtain access to information, this document can be provided in alternative format on request. Please contact [jpsreview@des.wa.gov.au](mailto:jpsreview@des.wa.gov.au) with specific requests or telephone 08 9441 1900.*

### School and Review Details

<b>Principal:</b>	Mrs Julie Denholm
<b>Board Chair:</b>	Ms Pam Starkey
<b>School Address:</b>	20 Wanliss Street, Jarrahdale WA 6124
<b>Number of Students:</b>	80
<b>ICSEA<sup>1</sup></b>	982
<b>Reviewers:</b>	Ms Margaret Banks (Lead) Mr Noel Strickland
<b>Review Dates:</b>	7 and 8 March 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.

---

<sup>1</sup> 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](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)?***

Jarrahdale Primary School is in the Serpentine Jarrahdale Shire, located approximately 50 kilometres south-east of Perth. Originally opened in 1874 to serve the children of a large mill town, the current classroom buildings date from 1954 with more recent additions of a library, an undercover area and a kitchen/canteen.

In 2015, the school became an IPS. While enrolments were showing a decline over the past five years, this year has seen a small increase to 80 students with 50 boys and 30 girls in four classes from Years K–6 including six Aboriginal students. The ICSEA of 982 has fluctuated each year between 1007 in 2014 to 967 in 2015. While still rural, the demographics of Jarrahdale and the surrounding area are changing due to nearby housing developments and residents commuting to the city for employment or fly-in fly-out arrangements.

### Findings

- The Business Plan 2015–17, informed by the Department of Education Strategic Plan, was revised following a review of the business plan and data as well as from information received and professional support from officers from the Expert Review Group (ERG) in 2016. The principal indicated the original business plan had limited impact on the strategic direction and that the targets were not well defined. The new Business Plan 2018–20 has been used to guide the strategic direction of the school. Both plans follow similar structures including vision, values and two focus areas of “success for all students” and “high quality teaching and leadership”. A third focus area from the original plan of “community collaboration and connections” has now been split into two focus areas of “safe and supportive environment” and “strong effective community partnerships”.
- The principal advised the difference between the two plans was primarily the result of the development process of the second plan, which had more significant input from staff, the board and the community than had been the case for the original plan. Planning days were well attended by staff and parents to revamp the vision, values and beliefs. Consequently, parents and board members indicated their commitment to the revised business plan.

- In the Business Plan 2018–20 targets, strategies listed under “we will” and “performance tools” are clearly defined for each focus area. During interviews with the principal and teachers, evidence was provided on the use of the business plan to guide the school’s operational and class plans. The integration of documents and the demonstrated use of the class plans showed the business plan to be of prime importance and effective in driving whole-school activities and improvements.
- While the student improvement targets are set around National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) scores and attendance, the principal identified the difficulties in setting effective targets for a small school with a changing ICSEA. The principal has not wavered in her current endeavours to develop the most effective targets possible and to show the progress of each student.
- A comprehensive self-reflection document indicated the business plan was effective in directing the implementation of strategies as well as monitoring the achievement of targets and progress across the whole school.
- The business plan meets the requirements of the DPA and has been shown to be effective in providing direction to the school.
- As this is the first cycle for the school as an IPS, there are no previous reviews to be published. The principal indicated there are plans to publish and distribute this report.
- The business plans are available on the school website and readily available in hard copy.

### **Area of strength**

- Modification of the business plan demonstrating a commitment to improvement and inclusive of staff, parent and community consultation.

### **Area for improvement**

- Continue to refine the targets of the business plan to demonstrate school improvement.

## Teaching and Learning

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

### Findings

- System and school data demonstrates that student performance improved over the life of the 2015–17 Business Plan. Staff acknowledge that an ERG review conducted early in 2016 was central to this improvement. The use of individual education plans for identified students together with individual target setting for all children ensures all students' performance is tracked and monitored regularly.
- Discussion with a small group of parents confirmed that parents were very satisfied with student performance in the school.
- The principal ensures the monitoring of student performance for purposes of making evidence-based instructional decisions and providing feedback to students and parents. A school-developed assessment schedule outlines a comprehensive set of monitoring procedures to be implemented for each year level and when these are to be completed.
- School-collected information on all students is entered by teachers on a whole-school data collection spreadsheet. The spreadsheet is closely monitored by the principal to ensure all data is entered in a timely manner. Discussion with staff indicated that data collected on this spreadsheet is central to their planning to ensure they can provide a differentiated curriculum for students. Staff also confirmed that it is used to identify strengths and weaknesses in their teaching program and to guide program development.
- Discussion with parents and students confirmed that all students were expected to perform to the best of their ability. Parents were very complimentary of the staff's ability to cater for the individual needs of all students. These discussions also confirmed that students were well prepared to enter secondary school, which in most cases are significantly larger than Jarrahdale Primary School.
- Collaboration between teachers occurs both formally in regular staff meetings and informally during the school day.

- The school has developed a comprehensive performance management system. Teachers participate in an integrated process which includes regular coaching sessions with the principal, self-reflection based on the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers, classroom observation visits by the principal and peer observation sessions. All staff value the specific feedback they receive and believe their teaching is improving because of this process.
- The comprehensive documentation will ensure the sustainability of programs and procedures which have been developed. This documentation includes the regular review of school operations so that changes are made as required.

### **Areas of strength**

- A comprehensive performance management process.
- Strong leadership provided by the principal to ensure uniformity in teaching practices across the school.

## Student Performance Monitoring

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

### Findings

- Early in the Business Plan 2015–17 cycle, the principal and school board realised that the targets developed were not satisfactory. As a result, the annual reviews did not focus on these targets but instead on more specific targets that had been developed in operational plans. The reviewers were shown documentation which outlined an ongoing annual review process. The IPS Review Self-Reflection Document 2018 provides a comprehensive review of the Business Plan 2015–17 targets.
- The school's assessment schedule is an annual timetable for the implementation of assessment tasks for each year level. Data collected includes NAPLAN (Year 3 and Year 5), On-entry assessment (Years PP–2), Progressive Achievement Tests (mathematics and socio-emotional), Letters and Sounds Tracker, Words Their Way, PM Benchmark Reading Assessment Resources, Waddington Reading Test (Years K–6) and the Friendly Schools Tracking Tool (grammar, science and humanities and social sciences).
- The principal has also used the National School Improvement Tool and has indicated that this will be completed annually to further monitor school performance. Together with the assessment schedule, this ensures that the school continually self-assesses its performance.
- The annual report is made available to the public through Connect, on the school website and in hard copy. While the annual report provides a detailed outline of the school performance, it does not specifically report on the targets in the business plan.
- The school has undertaken a self-review of the National Quality Standard (NQS) for early childhood education and an external verification process. The school has met all seven quality areas and continues to formally monitor its performance.
- The reviewers are assured that the current processes are well established and documented, which will ensure that they are sustainable.

**Area of strength**

- The monitoring of student performance.

**Area for improvement**

- Ensure the annual report includes specific reference to targets outlined in the business plan.

## Program Delivery

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

### Findings

- The principal has ensured that education programs meet legislative requirements. The staff has fully implemented the Western Australian Curriculum and Assessment Outline and uses it as a basis for all school-developed operational plans, scope and sequence documents, and classroom planning. School planning documents ensure common approaches.
- School policies and procedures meet Department of Education requirements. Discussion with staff and parents confirm the day-to-day management of the school is of a high standard.
- The school uses the Friendly Classrooms social program as a basis for common practice and language across the school. It has recently implemented the Zones of Regulation program which is designed to help children recognise when they are becoming angry and gives them methods to maintain control. These programs contribute to the safe environment upon which both parents and students commented.
- What commenced as the Stephanie Alexander garden program has developed into the Earth Aware program which not only includes gardening and cooking but also a whole-school approach to recycling and sustainability. The program plays a significant role in promoting cross-year group relationships, parent and community involvement, healthy eating, a sustainable environment and activities that bring rewarding learning experiences. Staff indicated that flexible arrangements and support are available to ensure the safety of all students. The kitchen garden was deemed by the interviewed students to be a favourite feature of their learning program.
- Staff-developed operational plans and scope and sequence documents guide the delivery of educational programs. The use of individual targets for all students ensures that the delivery of programs is differentiated so that the needs of all children are met.

- Discussion with staff confirmed their commitment to ongoing professional learning. They all spoke highly of the integrated performance management procedures which utilise peer and principal observations and coaching to develop their skills and to identify individual needs for professional learning. The staff have been supported by various Teacher Development Schools to enhance their teaching skills. Discussion with the education assistants confirmed their inclusion in all professional learning which gives them the skills to support the teaching programs in classes.

### **Area of strength**

- The integrated performance management processes which have been embraced by all staff.

## 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

- The facilities include four classrooms, a computer laboratory, a music/art room, a library, an undercover area, a canteen used as the Stephanie Alexander kitchen, play areas and a sports oval. The large grounds and surrounding areas are attractive, exceptionally well maintained and include the kitchen garden, an outdoor classroom space and memorial area. The natural bush surrounding the school is used safely for nature play during the winter season. Planning and sourcing of funds to revamp the early years play area are well progressed. Information and communications technology (ICT) equipment such as interactive whiteboards has been kept up to date, iPads are shared across classrooms and the ICT laboratory is used for a wide range of purposes. The Year 3 class was observed learning Indonesian and the Year 5 and Year 6 class producing persuasive texts using ICT. Teachers reported that they always prepare alternative means of lesson delivery in case of any technical issues.
- School processes have ensured the alignment of resources to the needs of students and the business plan. The manager corporate services and the principal effectively manage resources, monitor expenditure and, where appropriate, provide submissions to funding bodies such as Lotterywest for grants and projects. The finance committee consists of three staff and meets regularly to monitor and review expenditure and the budget. The documents are shared with and discussed by the board.
- Current staffing includes the principal, seven teachers (4.8 full-time equivalent [FTE]) and six support staff (2.4 FTE). Additional funds have been allocated for a special needs education assistant to provide additional support to students at educational risk. Regular meetings have built cohesion between staff and a shared understanding of the school's values, vision and priorities. Staff are supported with resources for training and professional learning relevant to their roles and performance management goals.
- A comprehensive workforce plan takes full account of the current staff demographics, factors influencing current and future needs and sets out strategies for the future. Although the school is small, staffing needs are at times complex with some staff on leave for a range of purposes and part-time arrangements to be accommodated. Succession planning, managing teacher relief, responding to students with special needs and leave arrangements are

addressed. The principal has ensured that staffing needs are balanced with the optimum arrangements for students. Induction of new staff was verified through an interview with teachers who commenced this year. In addition to school documents and plans, systems are in place to provide information to the next teacher.

- A partnership with Karnet Prison Farm, Department of Corrective Services, has resulted in landscaping work to improve the layout of memorial areas, garden beds and an outdoor classroom.
- Other partnerships include the Returned and Services League, the Community Association, Mundijong library and the Pay Group. Working with each partner brings benefits to the school and experiences to the students.
- The financial and physical resources of the school are well managed and with ongoing support from parents, community and agencies the current programs are sustainable.

### **Area of strength**

- A quality workforce plan utilised to ensure the best teaching and support arrangements for students.

## School Board

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

### Findings

- The board membership is representative of the school and complies with the *School Education Act 1999* and *School Education Regulations 2000* which specify the membership categories and composition. The board is chaired by the community member. Four or five meetings are held each year with one as an open meeting.
- Through interviews and review of the minutes it was demonstrated that members understood the functions and role of the board as prescribed in the *School Education Act 1999*, *School Education Regulations 2000* and Department policy.
- The members bring to the board a range of skills and a strong commitment to the school and community.
- The board made a successful transition from a school council in 2015 and has developed a schedule of agenda items to ensure it is meeting the requirements of the DPA through:
  - the endorsement of the DPA for 2015–17
  - development and endorsement of the business plan
  - development and endorsement of the annual reports
  - development, endorsement and review of the school budget
  - review of the school's performance
  - analysis of the results of the school opinion surveys.
- The communication of the board to the school and community is effective. Communication strategies have been developed and updated. The use of Connect has further enhanced communication. The community is aware of the functions and role of the board and has shown a keen interest in participating.
- The board receives:
  - financial reports
  - the results from the review of the ERG and the NQS audit

- feedback on school performance and student improvement targets, as detailed in the school plans.
- Documentation showed the board is actively engaged in the development and review of school policies, plans and data. Reports on the school's performance, including the comprehensive analysis of the performance of the school with respect to the DPA and the business plan contained in the IPS Review Self-Reflection Document 2018, were provided to the board and lively discussion and feedback ensued.
- The board has not conducted any self-review processes.
- Parents and members of the Jarrahdale community have a strong interest in the school, its culture, the quality of the programs and education, its reputation, and links to the whole community. To this end the parents and community members of the board recognise the importance of governance and opportunities to influence the direction through the business plan, communication and promotion of the school. While monitoring the targets of the business plan, the progress has not been reported to the school community by the board. Parents who are not on the board indicated the catering for individual needs of students was a key feature of the school rather than the reporting of aggregated data against targets.
- The board has greatly benefited from continuity of membership, including the chair. It also operates with a clearly defined code of conduct and schedule for agenda items which ensures a systematic coverage of key functions. Succession planning and the status of the board with the school community have effectively laid the foundation for ongoing governance and oversight of the school.

### **Areas of strength**

- The members perform the functions and role of the board effectively and as described in the DPA.
- The commitment and skills of the chair in governance and oversight of the school.

### **Areas for improvement**

- Implement a board self-review process.
- Communicate the school's progress against the targets of the business plan to the community.

### Conclusion

The principal, board and staff of Jarrahdale Primary School have worked tirelessly over the last few years to develop and revise structures, policies and processes with a focus on improvement in keeping with the DPA. Although the enrolment is small, students and parents value all aspects of the school highly. It is recognised that the significant investment in time and effort to build the school's performance and systems to the current level required much of the individuals involved and such efforts are not easily sustained. What has been put in place should more easily become routine over the next few years.

A culture of being a local, community school with a focus on individual students, their needs and their progress has been established. The ethos of caring for each other emerged throughout discussions with students, parents and staff. The vision and values are being enacted in classrooms and the playground.

Parents expressed high levels of satisfaction with the school, its programs and level of communication with teachers. It was clear the situation had changed positively over several years and current levels of satisfaction were the result of a combination of school culture, programs, staff and leadership. The parents valued the flexibilities of the IPS process and the benefits in shaping a school to match the community.

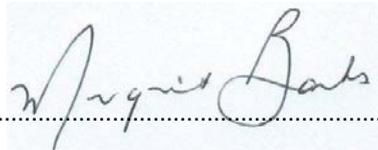
Class liaison parents are in place for each class providing email and text links between parents and the school on both small and significant matters including welcoming new parents. A strong and active Parents and Citizens' Association assists in raising funds and creating social activities such as discos, sausage sizzles, youth events and the uniform shop. Parents and community members volunteer in a variety of ways including preparing student morning tea and lunch foods from the garden as well as providing support in the library and classrooms.

Comments from staff, parents and students confirmed the school provides individual attention to students in response to their needs, and that it is a community-based school with a family orientation where children are safe and receive a stimulating, encouraging and enjoyable learning program.

## 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 Jarrahdale 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.



Ms Margaret Banks, Lead Reviewer

9 April 2018

Date



Mr Noel Strickland, Reviewer

27 March 2018

Date



Mr Ken Perris, Director  
Independent Public School Review

9 April 2018

Date