



Government of Western Australia
Department of Education Services

Roseworth Primary School

2016

Independent Review Findings



Independent Review of
Independent Public Schools

Disclaimer

This document reports the findings of the Department of Education Services' review and verification of the school's self-review. The school's self-review has been complemented by information provided by the Department of Education and the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority.

The findings of the independent review are forwarded to the School Principal, the Board Chair, the Director General of the Department of Education and the Minister for Education.

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School and Review Details

Principal:	Mr Christopher Brackenreg
Board Chair:	Ms Jessica Biggs
School Location:	30 Stebbing Way, Girrawheen WA 6064
Number of Students:	316
Reviewers:	Mr Greg Clune (Lead) and Ms Megan Phillips
Review Dates:	21 and 22 March 2016
Initial Review:	2012

Purpose of the Review

The purpose of the independent review is to provide assurance to the school and its community, the Director General of the Department of Education and the Minister for Education on the extent to which the school has met its commitments as outlined in its Delivery and Performance Agreement (DPA) and associated Business Plan.

The focus of the review is on:

- how well the school has implemented self-review
- how well the school has improved student learning (achievement, progress and engagement) for all students
- how well the school has created an environment that promotes learning and student well-being
- how well the school is placed to sustain and improve its performance.

Review Methodology

The school has been required, under the DPA, to undertake annual self-assessments of its performance. The outcome of these assessments formed the basis for the school's self-review. The school sent its self-review documentation to the IPS Review Team, Department of Education Services one month prior to the commencement of the review.

The IPS reviewers supplemented the information provided by the school 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
- the Department of Education School Performance Monitoring System
- Schools Online reports.

Reviewers analysed the evidence presented in the school's self-review documentation to verify achievement and developed lines of inquiry where further verification was required.

An agenda for the review visit was subsequently negotiated with the Principal to enable the gathering of evidence to verify claims made by the school. During the review visit, the reviewers sourced evidence to support the school's self-review claims through observation and discussion with leaders, teaching and support staff, board members, parents and students.

The evidence provided by the school, along with information gathered by the reviewers prior to and during the review visits, was used as the basis for the verification of how well the school has met its commitments as outlined in the DPA and Business Plan.

This document reports on the findings of the independent review.

School Context

What are the important features of this school's context that have an impact on student learning?

Roseworth Primary School is located in Girrawheen, a northern suburb of Perth, 13 kilometres from the CBD. The school site is shared by the Roseworth Education Support Centre, which is managed separately, and hosts a regional Child and Parent Centre (CPC) as well as Dental Therapy Unit, a Community Health Nurse and the Edith Cowan University-Fogarty Professional Learning Centre.

Girrawheen is a suburb of mostly young couples, families, first-home owners and immigrants. The percentage of children aged 0–4 (9%) is high. The unemployment rate for the area is over 9%. While over 60% of the population is Australian-born, including a significant indigenous population, the area is ethnically diverse with a concentration of Vietnamese, Burmese, Sudanese, Indian and other migrants.

The school is located in a low socio-economic area. The Index of Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) is 880 with data showing 82% of enrolments in the bottom 50% with only 4% in the top quartile. The school community is highly disadvantaged with significant levels of poverty. This is reflected in the school by many students experiencing various levels of deprivation (socio-economic, skills and life opportunity). The Department of Child Protection and Family Services has a significant caseload in the school. There is an increasing number of special needs students with identified disabilities and special health needs. The staff deal with many challenges on a daily basis because of the effect of disadvantage; a central factor in developing programs to address the needs of students. There are close links with local community support agencies to develop programs and services to address the needs of children and families. The community has long waiting lists for intervention services.

Enrolment (March 2016) has been reduced to 316 due to a deliberate strategy to reduce out-of-area enrolments. Projections show a stable enrolment of 320 for the period of the next Business Plan. Student diversity reflects the multicultural characteristics of the suburb with 32% having English as an additional language or dialect (EAL/D) background and 16% indigenous.

The EAL/D enrolments are expected to increase with the 2016 Kindergarten group comprising nearly 50% children having EAL/D. Twenty-two per cent of students have special learning needs. 2015 Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) data shows significant vulnerability with 18 of 32 children identified as either 'developmentally vulnerable' or 'developmentally at risk' in the Physical Health and Well-being category and 20 in the Communication and General Knowledge category. This data shows an increase in numbers of children at risk from 2012. An increasing number of students present with special learning needs (identified disabilities and health). There is a high degree of student transiency (30%) which is a limiting factor in ensuring school culture stability and implementation of effective intervention processes.

Teaching staff (22.6 FTE) and support staff (16 FTE) reflect a mix of experience with an average age of 45; 25% are aged under 35. There is a significant gender imbalance reflected by a predominantly female staff (91%). Thirty per cent are on fixed-term contracts. Turnover of staff has been minimal in 2015 and 2016. Anticipated retirements over the next three years have important implications for future planning. Staffing reflects provision for specialised programs to address students' needs. Early intervention strategies, such as the school-funded playgroup (0 to 4 age group), are a key focus for staff allocation. Leadership turnover has been high with five principals in five years.

A strength of the school is the strong and well-established partnerships and links with community groups which include the *Fogarty Foundation*, the *Smith Family*, *Foodbank*, *Edith Cowan* and *Curtin Universities* and the CPC. Additional partnerships are in place with other community groups such as the local *Uniting Church*.

The Board brings a range of expertise and backgrounds to the school including community and partnership members. Members are engaged, have a clear understanding of their strategic role and are well informed. The Board is effective, innovative and proactive through its involvement with shaping the direction of the school, development of community partnerships, performance evaluation and oversight of the school's financial, educational and social objectives.

The school is well resourced. Sound financial management has enabled it to implement programs and acquire resources to meet students' needs.

The School's Self-Review Process

How effective was the school's self-review in accounting for its performance during the period of the DPA and Business Plan?

All staff and board members were involved in a rigorous cyclical review process of the 2010–2014 Business Plan and the commitments of the DPA. A range of data sources was used to assess outcomes in terms of performance measures and student achievement.

The annual self-review process in 2014 was used by staff and the School Board to determine priority and focus areas for the 2015–2018 Business Plan. The reviewers observed the staff had undertaken continuous and rigorous interrogation of data at the classroom, year, team (K–2, 3–4, 5–6) and whole-school levels through a structured and effective review process. A school assessment flowchart is used by staff to guide review processes.

Analysis of student achievement and progress was prepared and presented by the leadership team, followed by in-depth review by each learning area and focus area committee to identify strengths, weaknesses and recommendations for future development across the targeted areas of literacy, numeracy, behaviour, attendance and values. An operational framework for academic and non-academic learning areas facilitated further detailed review.

The reviewers determined, from the data presented and discussion during the school visit, the findings of the review are thoroughly understood and endorsed by staff and the Board.

The school's self-review was comprehensive, systematic, and meticulously recorded, and disseminated transparently. It provides assurance the school is meeting the commitments of the DPA and the key performance indicators of the Business Plan.

School Performance—Student Learning

How well has the school performed in improving learning (achievement, progress and engagement) for all students?

The 2010–2014 Business Plan identified seven key focus areas to frame operational strategies and performance targets. Specific targets and operational strategies were expressed for literacy, numeracy, science, values, professional renewal, attendance and partnerships. In addition, the staff developed a schema for addressing the elements of the Plan for Public Schools 2008–2011 as part of the Business Plan. The Business Plan proposed a comprehensive set of operational strategies and performance targets.

The basis for target setting is the identification of significant strengths and weaknesses in student achievement and progress, in academic and non-academic areas. It is supported by comparisons with Australian, State and statistically similar schools and expected achievements of students. Results of the clear, focused and exemplary analysis of data required to verify progress towards the targets of the Business Plan were presented. Board, teachers and education assistants were familiar with the strategies and programs in place to assist all students to meet the broad targets of the Business Plan and targets set for individual and group progress across all learning areas and all year levels.

Literacy targets were set for Years 1, 2 and 3 and for National Assessment Program—Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) writing in Years 5 and 7. Numeracy targets were defined for Year 3 and for NAPLAN in Years 5 and 7. NAPLAN longitudinal data (2012–2015) shows there has been progress. The trend is positive, with the exception of Year 3 writing and Year 5 writing and reading. Teacher judgement has been inconsistent, with weak correlation with external testing. NAPLAN achievement shows the school is statistically similar to like schools. With the exception of writing (Year 5), the percentage of students in the top 20% of NAPLAN scores has increased from 2013 to 2015. Likewise, the percentage in the bottom 20% has decreased with significant improvement for Year 3 reading, writing and spelling and Year 5 numeracy. Year 5 numbers in the bottom 20% have increased for writing and spelling. The percentage of students achieving at or below National Minimum Standard shows improvement but remains significant, particularly for boys in reading and writing.

Annual school-wide assessment, using a number of external instruments (On-entry, literacy and numeracy tests) is extensive and used to measure progress. Data from tests is used for diagnosis and the development of intervention strategies and provided evidence to establish key targets for the 2015–2018 Business Plan. The school's fine-grained analysis and longitudinal data from various testing instruments enables close tracking of students. The National Quality Standard assessment provides information to facilitate planning for the early years. In all measures, there is evident progress in student outcomes which shows the staff has met or is working towards meeting the key performance indicators.

Science operational strategies were expressed in terms of curriculum implementation and resource acquisition. No specific evidence was provided, although the school is implementing the WA Curriculum and electronic whiteboards have been installed (as part of providing technologies to support teaching and learning of science).

A coordinated values program has been implemented across the school to promote socio-emotional skills, positive attitudes and behaviour. The *National Framework for Values Education* and the *You Can Do It* rubrics are used. Biennial testing and analysis informs the school of progress. The school is showing progress towards achievement of the key performance indicators but is below the sample mean in most areas. The 2015 *You Can Do It* rubric data shows a strong trend towards developing a greater awareness of social-emotional skills with significant improvement compared with the same cohort in 2013.

Attendance targets focused on reducing the number of students in the 'at risk' category for attendance and increasing regular attendance. Attendance (91.6%) is close to the State average (92.7%) and significantly exceeds that of like schools (88.6%). Overall attendance (2015) compares favourably with 89% in 2013. Attendance of Aboriginal students (88.7%) exceeds that for like schools (77.5%) and the State (81.2%). Targets were met for Years 2, 4, 5 and 6, with other years close to meeting the target. Regular attendance showed improvement of 6.3% from 2013 to 2015. At-risk categories showed an increase, with 16% of students in the Indicated At Risk category, which is higher than the target of 12% by 2015. The seventy-five students (23%) in the severe or moderate attendance categories have individual attendance plans. Linked to attendance is a punctuality 'Lateness' strategy which had made significant improvement to student punctuality from 2013 to 2015.

Attendance and punctuality are closely monitored with time allocated for an education assistant (0.1 FTE) to check for attendance issues.

The distributed leadership and collaborative processes have improved the learning of cohorts and other sub-groups of students. The evidence-based explicit teaching and learning model is used to advantage, resulting in increased teacher confidence and finely tuned intervention plans for individuals and groups across all learning areas.

Professional renewal was a key focus area for the 2010–2014 Business Plan with the goal of improving the quality of teaching to improve learning outcomes. The school has made a significant investment in this area to address the current and emerging needs of students, such as the increasing number at educational risk and EAL/D. Targeted explicit professional learning, peer coaching and self-review supports the development of staff understanding and skills. Support, provided by the *Fogarty Foundation* and *Edith Cowan University*, provides leaders and other staff with opportunities to enrich skills and support one another through the use of the purpose-built observation and assessment facility. Performance management is regular and systematic and based on the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers.

School Performance—Quality of the Learning Environment

How well has the school performed in creating an environment that promotes learning and well-being for all students and the attainment of the school vision?

The review documentation, complemented by conversation with staff, students and parents and observations of classrooms, indicated the school has an embedded culture of high expectation, provides services to support student learning and is committed to the removal of barriers to learning. Common processes through whole-school implementation include an explicit teaching approach (based on the Fleming model) and a whole-school approach to behaviour management. There is an evident cyclical process of school-wide data analysis and regular adjustments to strategies and learning programs to meet student needs. Effective collaboration at year level, block level (K–2, Years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6) and whole school enables quick response to shifts in data or to emergent needs. Areas for improvement are clearly identified and data is used to inform the staff of progress. The school's current emphasis is on improving literacy and numeracy, behaviour management and information and communication technology (ICT) implementation to support effective teaching and learning. The appointment of a 0.2 FTE teacher to coordinate the explicit teaching strategy supports teachers and minimises variation across the school. Structures are in place to provide collaborative meeting time for teachers to work together to analyse student performance and review curriculum planning.

A strong committee structure embraces all areas of the school's endeavour including learning areas, values education, students at educational risk, pastoral care and engagement, behaviour, and attendance. Differentiated approaches are implemented to cater for students with different learning styles for enrichment and for those at academic, social, emotional and physical risk. Diverse individual student plans, including individual education plans, individual behaviour management plans and individual attendance plans, are in place for many students; up to 70% of students in a class may be on an intervention plan. In 2016, the Principal used staffing flexibility to reduce class sizes to facilitate better behaviour management and attention to individual student learning programs. Aboriginal students are well supported by an Aboriginal and Islander Education Officer who plays a key role in communication between families and the school and providing cultural advice for staff and the Board.

The school focuses on the provision of an inclusive and safe environment. Students reported they are 'always in safe hands' and that, when there are incidents of bullying or unacceptable behaviour, the school 'deals with it' effectively. Implementation of a school-wide Behaviour Management Policy and Procedures is effective and provides a coordinated and systematic framework through which the school's emphasis on developing values and appropriate behaviour is reinforced. Analysis shows a reduction in recorded behaviour incidents from 2013 to 2015. The explicit Values Education Program impacts on students, staff and parents/carers and supports the behaviour policy. Professional learning opportunities ensure there is strong staff agreement for, and systematic implementation of a united approach to behaviour management and the provision of positive and safe environment.

A Student Services team provides a range of support opportunities for staff and student well-being and promotes a whole-school approach to provision of support. The team includes a deputy principal (student services), psychologist and chaplain. Staffing flexibility is used to provide additional psychologist and chaplain time. Selected senior students provide a student playground support team to assist with behaviour at recess and lunch. Transition programs from Kindergarten to Pre-primary to Year 1 to Year 2 facilitate detailed handover of **student data and transfer of student information to aid in effective inclusive provision for all students.** The 0–4 years playgroup, funded by the school, provides opportunity for early intervention, breaking down barriers and establishment of positive relationships between families and school. Access to health, therapy, other services and parent training programs are available through the CPC which provides support for at least 50 Roseworth Primary School families from Kindergarten to Year 2. A breakfast club (supported by *Foodbank* and attended by up to 100 students three times per week), provision of uniforms and equipment, grief counselling, the Buz life skills program conducted by the Chaplain, the Roseworth and Parents' Program, the school passport program (which enables up to 45 families to gain credit for services offered to the school) are some of the practical ways the school strives to assist children and families with socio-emotional and other support. The school provides a bridge to services for students and families.

Parent survey data (2014), confirmed in discussion with parents, showed the school has a good reputation in the community and a strong level of parent satisfaction.

The staff is very supportive of students and families and effectively meets the needs of all students: parents reported the multi-faceted pastoral approach to well-being, support for at risk students and the progress of all students are major positive factors of the school. Parents indicated: the school sets high standards for achievement and behaviour; there are positive relationships between the school and students and parents; they are kept informed by the class teachers who are always available to parents and that communication also occurs, through the newsletter, SMS and school website. The only suggestion for improvement made by parents was that extension classes be made available for more able students.

In addition to the CPC, there are effective partnerships with Edith Cowan and Curtin Universities to provide additional support across all year levels. Ongoing pre-service teacher training adds value to learning opportunities in the school's classrooms. The *Fogarty Professional Learning Centre* provides professional learning opportunities for staff in literacy coaching and peer conferencing. Curtin University final year students, under the auspices of *Next Challenge Consultancy*, provide support in the provision of speech, occupational and physiotherapy assessment and programs. The school employs a Level 3 education assistant (0.4FTE) to coordinate the therapy program and to implement individual student programs. On-site *Health Department* services provide dental and community nurse support. The *Smith Family* provides a *Learning for Life* worker with a family liaison role linked to the school, supports up to 25% of families via scholarships and offers a variety of *Smith Family* programs. The Classroom Management Strategies team provides professional development for staff on an ongoing basis as required. The school has strong partnerships and a number of programs sourced with outside agencies.

The staff strives to provide a collaborative and integrated service delivery model to provide programs and service for pre-school children, school students and families, which will provide positive learning and essential skills. Positive, caring and respectful relationships are strengths of the school.

School Performance—Sustainability

How well placed is the school to sustain and improve its performance into the next planning cycle?

The review process indicates the school is soundly placed to sustain its improvement agenda. It has adapted well to the IPS commitments and responsibilities and makes astute use of the flexibilities available. There is strong and collaborative leadership with shared responsibility for analysing and responding to data which is used to set improvement targets. The established distributed leadership processes provide many opportunities for extended leadership and have contributed to high staff morale, which is critical in achieving the school's intentions.

The Board is well established with necessary expertise to assist with strategic decision-making and accountability. It participates in training, data analysis and review of the Business Plan targets. The Board participates in all aspects of the DPA commitments. The Board has demonstrated it is able to support the implementation of the school vision. It will be important the Board monitors its succession planning and ensures representation of the parent body.

Continuation of partnerships will be critical in sustaining the direction of the school and the provision of support, especially for at-risk families.

Professional learning for staff has been critical and will continue to be an integral component in consolidating and sustaining improvement and meeting the targets of the Business Plan.

Structures and processes for review and planning are coordinated and embedded. These are reliant on staff engagement, dialogue and whole-school planning to ensure the agreed approaches and standards are sustained. The provision of holistic student services will be critical through the well-established student services team and community support opportunities.

The school has a well-considered workforce plan which shows it has examined its staffing needs in terms of responding to student needs and the implementation of the Business Plan and annual operational plans. Staff are well supported with professional learning opportunities which have equipped them to competently address the school's improvement agenda. Assessment data (On-entry, NQS, AEDC) may influence workforce planning in the early years of schooling.

There are a number of students in the latest analysis showing significant vulnerability in one or two domains of the AEDC 2015 information. Strategic staff recruitment will be essential to sustain student achievement.

The school has sufficient resources and infrastructure to support its improvement agenda. Continuation of the successful partnerships will be critical in terms of sustaining the vital programs offered through them. Loss of any of these partnerships may jeopardise the range and quality of services provided by the school.

The review process provides confidence the staff will be able to sustain improvements and work consistently towards further improvement in student learning outcomes and achievement of the targets of the Business Plan.

Conclusion

The staff has undertaken a comprehensive and transparent self-analysis which demonstrates thoroughness in meeting all elements of the DPA and Business Plan.

While many students present with a range of disadvantage, all staff show commitment to deliver teaching, learning, opportunities and services which will intervene in the cycle of disadvantage and promote the well-being of all students both academically and non-academically.

The consistent and regular review of progress against the Business and Operational Plans, demonstrates Roseworth Primary School has a determined focus on improvement. The refinements for the 2015–2018 Business Plan give focused attention to student achievement in all domains. The school's established processes will support the achievement of these outcomes. There is a culture and practice of review through established distributed leadership, collaborative processes and shared accountability. There is a strong sense of the staff's commitment to achieving the best possible outcomes for students.

Commendations

The following areas are commended:

- the excellence of the school's self-review
- the extensive analysis of all aspects of the school's endeavour
- establishment of common pedagogical, behavioural management and attendance approaches
- implementation and assessment of the values program
- the 0–4 playgroup
- the use of staffing flexibility to provide reduced class sizes and additional education assistant time to priority areas
- holistic student support to intervene where there is disadvantage
- establishment of effective partnerships and community links
- the improved attendance rates.

Areas for Improvement

The following areas for improvement are identified:

- literacy and numeracy outcomes
- programs/strategies to enhance the engagement and achievement of boys
- consistency of teacher judgements to ensure correlation with external testing
- Board succession planning and representation of the school community.

Declaration

We, the undersigned, hereby confirm that the information provided in this findings document is to the best of our knowledge true and correct and is based on the verification of the evidence provided by Roseworth Primary School as part of the Department of Education Services' independent review process. The Principal and Board Chair have had an opportunity to comment on any matters of fact contained within this document.



Mr Greg Clune, Lead Reviewer

18 April 2016

Date




Ms Megan Phillips, Reviewer

18 April 2016

Date



 Mr Richard Strickland, Director General,
Department of Education Services

28.4.2016

Date