



Government of Western Australia
Department of Education

Anne Hamersley Primary School

2018

Review Findings



Independent Public School Review

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School and Review Details

Principal:	Mr Rodney Simeons
Board Chair:	Ms Michelle Carroll
School Address:	16 Dunnett Drive, Ellenbrook WA 6069
Number of Students:	408
ICSEA¹	994
Reviewers:	Mr David Carvosso (Lead) Mr Rod Baker
Review Dates:	12 and 13 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.

¹ 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

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)?

Anne Hamersley Primary School is located on the northern perimeter of the rapidly growing suburb of Ellenbrook, a north-eastern suburb of Perth approximately 40 kilometres from the Perth central business district. The school is currently in its third year of operation, having opened in February 2016 with an initial enrolment of 206 children from Kindergarten to Year 6. The original cohort of students came from a diverse range of schools from all over Western Australia, other states and territories and from other countries. This enrolment has grown to 408, with the need for a transportable classroom to be provided at the commencement of 2018 to supplement the 16 purpose built classrooms and specialist facilities.

Being recently built, the school presents as an attractive learning environment. The buildings support a comprehensive educational program and are well maintained. The landscaped grounds have been developed with a great deal of thought and further complement the learning environment.

The school has an ICSEA of 994. There are 36 indigenous students enrolled and the school displays as highly multicultural with 88 students coming from homes where the language spoken is other than English. School enrolment data indicates that more than 40 different languages are spoken in the homes of the culturally diverse school population.

More than 85 community members attended a vision and mission setting workshop in late 2015. The workshop gave the school leadership team direction and has ensured the parent values and expectations are respected and acted upon. The school's vision of "Living together, learning together and succeeding together – Strive to Thrive" is an outcome of this initial workshop.

The school has a very active, albeit small Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) who have contributed resources to the school in their short time in operation. At the time of this report, the school board has only had one complete school year of operation being formed during the school's first year of operation and having their first meeting in August 2016.

Findings

- The Business Plan 2016–18, was by necessity, generated by the school's leadership team and staff. Although the business plan has the endorsement of

the school board, they had little input into the plan as the governance structures in the school were still under development.

- The business plan sets out ‘aspirations’ under six main initiatives and indicates the strategies and monitoring to be employed in achieving these initiatives:
 - wellbeing and engagement
 - early childhood
 - English
 - numeracy
 - science
 - sustainability.

Within the numeracy and English aspirations are triennial National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) targets.

- Discussions with the principal, school leadership and board members indicates an understanding that although the current plan has served its purpose, there are improvements which will be incorporated into the next planning cycle. It was evident that the school leadership team, staff and board members were already considering a more focused business plan for 2019–21 with more measurable targets focused on the specific areas of identified weakness. The Business Plan 2016–18 was framed with far less knowledge of the student cohort than will be the case for the second business plan.
- The business plan is supported by a School Improvement Plan 2017–19 in which the nine domains of the National School Improvement Tool are used to analyse, review and report. The staff use this tool in whole-school discussions to ensure they comply with the requirements of the DPA and these discussions, along with the analysis of data, result in specific strategic improvement plans.
- The business plan is available on the school’s website and hard copies have been distributed to all parents and caregivers. The school uses an application called Updat-ed and any subscribers to the application have a link to the school’s website and hence the business plan. The business plan is also provided, along with a prospectus in an enrolment package, to all new families at the school.

Areas for improvement

- Include input from the board and wider community, as the school community stabilises and the board establishes its governance role, in the next iteration of the business plan.

- Ensure the Business Plan 2019–21 is a more focused document with measurable targets based on the findings of the school's self-assessment of student achievement.

Teaching and Learning

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

Findings

- In discussions with staff members representing most areas of the school it was made very clear that the principal and his deputies constantly promote and model the belief that all students are capable of strong progress. Emphasis is placed on a key element of the school's mission of "establishing and continually promoting the ethos of high expectations, high care and the celebration of excellence in teaching and learning." Staff members spoke of their appreciation of the level of commitment set by the leaders and the way in which this has influenced their own work ethic and desire to develop professionally.
- The school's operations are clearly outlined in the Teachers Companion, a handbook that sets out procedures and processes to guide the work of teachers in their daily practice. Incoming staff members are inducted into the school's operations through the handbook.
- There are whole-school processes in place to support quality teaching and learning, with a literacy block timetabled for each class between the commencement of the school day and morning recess and a numeracy block timetabled for the period from recess until lunchtime. Teachers receive guidance from the school's leaders on the allocation of time to subjects within each block. There is a whole-school focus on explicit teaching in literacy and numeracy with school leaders and external consultants providing guidance and monitoring on the effectiveness of whole-class warm ups, teacher modelling, shared practice, guided practice, independent practice and review. There is a strong belief that pride in written work will flow on to other areas and, to achieve this, teachers are given clear guidelines on setting out and writing standards for their year level.
- The reviewers had the opportunity to visit classrooms and observe teachers and students in their learning environment. Students were actively engaged with their teachers who modelled explicit teaching techniques. Rooms had attractive displays of students' work together with the teachers' charts, guidelines for learning, word walls and print walks. Classrooms presented as positive places in which to work and learn.
- A whole-school approach to managing student behaviour, which the school prefers to refer to as wellbeing and engagement, is in place with school behaviour data showing that it is very effective. Based on the Friendly Schools

model, there is strong encouragement for students to perform at their best. Class-based incentives and rewards are supported by whole-school initiatives including the student passport where students earn stamps for outstanding achievement and behaviour leading, together with small rewards, to the high achiever badge when their passport is filled. Teachers are also given clear guidelines on the steps that they need to implement in their classrooms and in the playground for dealing with poor behaviour, before it is escalated to a deputy's office. Students who met with the reviewers had clear understandings of the consequences for poor behaviour. They also knew of, and had experienced, the rewards on offer for good behaviour which were displayed in the deputy principal's shared office.

- Close attention is paid to students who may be at educational risk due to a diagnosed intellectual disability, poor attendance, social and emotional issues, poor behaviour and/or have English as an additional language or dialect (EAL/D). Students who fall into these categories have documented plans, with the deputy principals playing a key role in overseeing the way they are managed. To assist in catering for students with language difficulties the school has employed a teacher, with recent experience in a language centre, to oversee the development of language programs, train teachers in their implementation in classrooms and assist in the implementation of EAL/D progress maps.
- Extension is offered to students who are talented with before and after school clubs (Maths Club, Writing Club) being available. Support is also provided to students and their families who are interested in seeking scholarships to secondary schools.
- Teachers are provided with regular opportunities to share ideas and engage in professional learning. Within stage of learning teams, timetables have been aligned to provide collaborative planning time with teachers working closely to share ideas and construct lesson plans. Additional meeting time occurs through the weekly 'early close', coordinated with all schools in the area, where agendas include presentations from the school's leaders, co-opted staff members and external experts. In addition, staff are encouraged to participate in at least three network meetings per year with colleagues from other local schools.
- It was evident to the reviewers that the principal ensures that staff are fully informed of school activities, programs and events that are likely to have impact on their work, including preparation for the 2018 IPS Review and the progress during the two days of the review. There is an inclusive approach taken to decision-making with a distributed leadership model providing staff members with many opportunities to lead programs and activities, capitalising on the experience, expertise and interest that they bring to the school. Examples of this include teacher participation in the school management and response team

(SMART), NAPLAN committee and as learning area coordinators who participate in the leadership and development of skills in literacy and numeracy. Other teachers, referred to as focus area leaders, lead the areas of art and sustainability, and health and physical education.

- All staff participate in performance management. While the focus for support staff is linked to the specific nature of their role and is managed by the principal, the focus for teachers is on the improvement of teaching skills. They are required to select two areas from the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers that they consider particularly relevant to their work, and develop these in consultation with one of the deputy principals. An interesting conclusion to this process is that the principal writes to the teachers about their progress after discussions with the deputies.

Areas of strength

- The guidelines provided to teachers by the leadership of the school, together with ongoing support, to ensure they can operate effectively.
- The implementation of whole-school processes in literacy and numeracy ensuring consistency of approach across all areas.
- The broad range of opportunities for staff to take up leadership roles.

Student Performance Monitoring

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

Findings

- The school's accountability plan sets out the processes that will be undertaken to monitor and improve student performance. These include details of the annual assessment process, the links between student performance and effective teaching, classroom observations and peer monitoring, and the types of professional learning that will best suit the school's needs. A schedule is in place that outlines for teachers the forms of assessment and testing that will be undertaken, the times during each semester when this will occur, and the timeline for reporting to parents.
- An exemplary self-review process is in place with high-quality data being collected on each student's performance, both academic and non-academic. The analysis of data is thorough and occurs in several forums including collaborative team meetings and whole-of-staff meetings. There is a broad focus on the information collected with discussions focusing on individual students, groups, classes, cohorts and the whole-school.
- While the outcomes of these discussions clearly influence the direction that the school will take, teachers also work with the deputy who is their line manager to show how they are using their assessment data to meet the needs of their students. This process involves an interesting step, designed by the principal, where teachers plot their students in literacy and numeracy on a proforma in the shape of a 'diamond', which has been broken down into bands matching the NAPLAN proficiency bands. In this way the school's leadership can have confidence that teachers are clearly aware of where their students sit in comparison to other students in the State. It also provides the opportunity to confirm that students at risk have been identified and interventions are being implemented to cater for them. During the year, the principal meets with each child and discusses their progress with them. The principal's observations and discussions with the child confirms the child's placement on the literacy and numeracy 'diamond' by the teacher. This process gives the principal a complete overview of the school and the standards across all classrooms.
- The school has set targets against two of the five key focus areas of the business plan, literacy and numeracy, with evidence provided to the reviewers of the detailed analysis of them. In recording progress against the targets, the school has retained the NAPLAN colours of green, yellow and red in easy reference

graphs showing school progress. For example, 86% of Year 6 students in 2017 met the reading target of “Read PM level 30+ with fluency, accuracy and comprehension” and this was flagged green, while only 58% of Year 4 students met the reading target of “Read PM level 26-27 with fluency, accuracy and comprehension” and this was flagged red.

- With the school being in just its third year of operation there is limited longitudinal data available to assist the principal and his staff in making judgements about progress over time. However, a comparison of 2016 and 2017 NAPLAN data with that of like-schools shows that the performance of Year 3 and Year 5 students at the school is similar to that of like-schools.
- The school has implemented its own form of ongoing student record, called the Connected Assessment File, with work samples and test copies, together with other relevant documents, being placed in a file that moves with the students as they progress through the school. This has been found to be an excellent source of information for handovers from one teacher to the next, for transition to secondary school, and for meetings with parents and carers.

Areas of strength

- The strong focus on the collection of data and the way it is used to assess overall school progress, identify strengths and weaknesses in classroom programs and those individual students who need support, and guide the implementation of the next stage of school improvement.
- The overview of student achievement gained by the school leadership team through strong performance monitoring processes.
- The provision and maintenance of the Connected Assessment File which clearly profiles each child’s progress and the interventions used for the duration of their enrolment in the school.

Program Delivery

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

Findings

- From the evidence provided, the reviewers are confident that the programs offered by the school are designed and delivered to meet the needs of students in accordance with relevant legislation and policy.
- The school has specialist teachers in the areas of physical education, science, art and music. It was evident to the reviewers that there is a strong liaison between classroom teachers and specialist teachers. Specialist programs support classroom programs and the reverse is also true.
- The school has commenced a languages other than English (LOTE) program with Mandarin commencing in Year 3, which will subsequently work its way up through the year levels. This program has been sourced and funded by the school and uses Skype for the class to interact with a Mandarin speaker in Beijing, China. The teacher in Beijing can see and interact with the class and students can see and speak with the LOTE teacher and, in addition, observe in real time the environment in Beijing. The teacher in Beijing has the names of the children and can interact with them as would a teacher in the classroom. The classroom teacher supervises the class and learns the language along with the students. As for the other specialist programs, what has been learned in Mandarin classes through technology can be integrated into other subjects.
- The school places a strong emphasis on whole-school programs. The wellbeing and engagement program is an example of this and it was evident in speaking with staff, students and parents that they understood the structure that lies behind this program. The terminology, “wellbeing and engagement”, is favoured over a behaviour management or discipline policy and is seen by the school community as a positive approach to behaviour management.
- Regular and minuted staff meetings ensure highly effective communication within the school. Each of the school blocks has a leader appointed on an annual basis. These leaders, together with one specialist teacher and the school leadership team, form the SMART group who meet once per fortnight after school. The SMART group form an effective conduit between the teaching blocks, specialists and school administration. The annual selection of representatives on this group develops leadership skills within the representatives and supports a distributed leadership model. Minutes of SMART meetings indicate a range of discussions

which have resulted in desired change and translated into school policy and practice.

- Learning area coordinators (English, mathematics, and science and technology) together with collaborative or project groups (humanities and social science, digital technologies, National Quality Standard, NAPLAN and sustainability) ensure focused program delivery, uniformity, continuity, and a culture of self-assessment and continuous professional improvement.
- The school presents as a safe and caring environment. This observation was supported in interviews held with parents, students and staff. There are clearly defined procedures in the school to maintain orderly conduct and the school is supported in these procedures by the board, parents and staff. The school was described by students interviewed, among other statements, as “friendly”, “understanding”, “amazing” and “safe”. There are a significant number of staff rostered for playground duty due to the school’s layout. Identified staff in the various blocks have the responsibility of opening and locking external entrances to the school at the beginning and end of each day. This results in all entry to the school being via the front administration office.
- Communication between teachers and parents is focused around the use of various digital platforms. Facebook, the school’s webpage, ClassDojo and the Updat-ed application are examples of communication methods. Although communication via digital technologies is a focus of the school, teachers use the telephone and written communication as appropriate. Both parents and children commented during interviews that they were pleased with the degree of communication between the school and the home and teachers made contact both when there was a concern and to convey a positive message about a child’s progress.
- The school has negotiated with Camp Australia for the provision of an out of school care program. The school has been able to identify a suitable space for the program to be offered and it is well supported by the school community.
- Although the school is just commencing its third year of operation, staff are offering extracurricular activities and given the commitment of staff, these are likely to expand in the future.
- The school is developing a strong reputation in the community as a safe and caring environment for children. The strong leadership and developing distributed leadership, together with whole-school processes and abundant evidence of a ‘team spirit’ among staff, will ensure the sustainability of program delivery to promote learning and wellbeing for all students.

Areas of strength

- The commitment in time by staff to various meetings and collaborative groups to ensure the curriculum and supporting programs in the school are delivered efficiently and effectively.
- The strong leadership and willingness of staff to take on leadership roles in all aspects of school life.
- The structures put in place in the school to ensure maximum collaboration, support and communication between staff and between the school and home.
- The array of specialist teacher programs which allow the classroom teacher to concentrate on the key curriculum areas relevant to all learning.
- The use of technology for the teaching of LOTE.
- The safe and inclusive learning environment.

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 reviewers were provided with documentation outlining the school's assessment cycle and its links to the business plan. There is a strategic approach taken to the purchasing and allocation of resources so that they best fit the implementation of strategies in the business plan. While there are controls on resourcing, staff members confirmed that they have opportunities to influence decisions on the purchase of materials and programs, either through scheduled meetings focusing on planning, or through collaborative and SMART meetings.
- The principal maintains a close involvement with the school's financial management, overseeing all spending. His prudent approach to the use of the foundation grant has ensured that the school was well resourced from the first day of operation with the curriculum materials essential for daily classroom operations.
- There is acknowledgement of the key role that information and communications technology plays in supporting student learning and assisting teachers to operate at a high level, with each classroom having an interactive white board. While students are encouraged to bring their own electronic device from home to use in class at appropriate times, two banks of laptop computers are available to ensure no student misses out. A set of computers has also recently been purchased to allow a computer laboratory to be set-up in the school library.
- Students are provided with a range of equipment to use during breaks, much of it colour coded to link to a teaching block. The playground is attractively laid out with a natural fall in the school site allowing slides on the banks and extensive play equipment attached to each teaching block. In the Early Childhood area, a large play structure has recently been purchased and erected with funds raised by the P&C.
- The principal has prepared a workforce plan that considers the anticipated long service leave and retirement plans of staff members. Contingency plans have also been prepared to cover any unexpected changes in leadership. With the rapidly escalating student enrolment, the selection of additional teachers has become a matter of priority. This is undertaken with some caution by the principal, with care being taken to ensure that prospective staff members have the skills to fulfil the identified needs. The employment of a teacher with an

EAL/D background and others with skills in art and science are examples of this carefully targeted staff selection process. Every effort is also made to ensure that applicants understand the way in which the school operates and that they will be expected to adopt the school's explicit teaching method.

- The reviewers are confident that the school will continue to operate at a high level. Despite a continuing rapid increase in enrolments, and the challenges that this will bring, the principal, supported by staff and the community, has a clear vision for the future and the motivation and commitment to see it achieved.

Areas of strength

- The effective use of financial resources to ensure curriculum and teaching materials essential for teaching and learning programs are available as needed.
- The care taken to ensure new staff members match the needs of the school.

School Board

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

Findings

- The school board comprises representation of parents and teachers. The gender and skill spread on the board is adequate and board members displayed an enthusiasm for their role. The composition of the board is consistent with legislated requirements.
- Although the board has only been in existence for one complete school year, board members interviewed displayed a sound understanding of their role and responsibilities. Board members had undertaken online training but had not engaged in the more rigorous face-to-face training presented by the Department of Education.
- Board minutes and discussions with board members indicate the board fulfils the functions as prescribed in legislation and in Department of Education policy. The board participates in the analysis of student performance data and has oversight of the allocation of funding to resources in support of student learning and welfare. Board members were complimentary of the information shared by the school staff with them and the assistance given by staff in the interpretation of this information.
- The school board minutes and agendas indicate they are engaged in the endorsement of the business plan, the annual report and the school budget. Discussions held with board members during the review visit indicate that the board receives and interrogates student performance data. Board members indicated they are prepared to and do ask the 'hard questions'. The board also reviews the analysis of parent, staff and student surveys. The school's first annual report does not include any statement from the board chair; however, the reviewers were informed that the 2017 Annual Report will address this deficiency.
- It was evident to the reviewers that at this early stage of development of the school, the P&C had a higher profile in documentation than the board. The board chair's name appears on the honour board in the school foyer along with the president of the P&C and staff and student leaders. The board is yet to establish a strong identity in the school and board members' names do not appear on the school's website and the board does not have a strong and regular presence in newsletters and other forms of communication. In the context of the school, this

is understandable and the reviewers have little doubt that it will be addressed quickly.

- The board reviews the financial statements of the school and with the assistance of the principal and manager corporate services are developing an understanding of the school finances.
- The board has not undertaken a review of its own performance to-date. As the board has only been in operation for one complete school year, again this is understandable. A board should; however, schedule a regular review of its own performance to identify areas of strength and areas of weakness.
- The board has instituted strong processes and procedures in its meeting agenda and this will ensure sustainability of these practices.
- The reviewers felt confident of the sustainability of the board in the knowledge that elections were required to select the inaugural board members; however, given that all board members were appointed at the same time and for the same term of office, to ensure a continuity of membership along with a regular turnover of members, succession plans need to be developed.

Areas for improvement

- Undertake board training offered by the Department of Education.
- Implement measures to raise the board profile within the school.
- Establish succession planning processes.

Conclusion

Anne Hamersley Primary School has a strong culture of learning and a belief that all students can learn. Although still in its infancy, the school has implemented strong processes within the school to deliver the curriculum, monitor student and school performance, and to address areas of identified need.

From the start, and prior to the school opening, the school's strong leadership team engaged the school community in the establishment of the school's vision and this has resulted in a solid community spirit within, and support for the school.

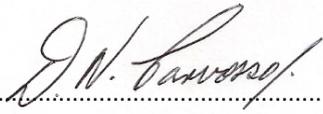
The school caters for a diverse range of multicultural children, the majority having transferred into the school from a myriad of other schools both local and from wider afield.

The school has selected staff who demonstrate a professionalism and commitment to teaching and learning. The parents and in particular, the children of the school are well served by a strong leadership team and a dedicated teaching and support staff.

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 Anne Hamersley 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.



Mr David Carvosso, Lead Reviewer

10 April 2018

Date



Mr Rod Baker, Reviewer

10 April 2018

Date



Mr Ken Perris, Director
Independent Public School Review

18 April 2018

Date