



Department of  
Education

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Public education  
**A world of opportunities**

# Walkaway Primary School

## Public School Review

October 2019

# PUBLIC SCHOOL REVIEW

## Purpose

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All Western Australian public schools are reviewed every three years by the Department of Education's Public School Accountability directorate. A review gives assurance to the local community, the Minister for Education and Training and the Director General that a school is operating effectively and delivering high quality education to its students. The review acknowledges the achievements of the school and gives feedback to support the principal and staff with their improvement planning.

The principal provides the review team with a self-assessment of the school's performance based on evidence gathered by the principal and staff. Information validated by the review team is considered before and during the school visit. This forms the basis for the school review report. The report is provided to the principal, the chair of the school board/council and the Regional Executive Director.

## Expectations of schools

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For all Western Australian public schools, expectations are set out in either: the Delivery and Performance Agreement, which is an agreement between the Department (represented by the Director General), school (represented by the principal) and school board (represented by the school board chair); or, the Principals' Statement of Expectations and the Funding Agreement for Schools.

## School performance rating

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This performance rating is based on information gained from the self-assessment submission and the validation process. It is focused on a review of the following areas of school performance: relationships and partnerships; learning environment; leadership; use of resources; teaching quality; and student achievement and progress.

The school's performance rating is:

	<b>Effective</b>
	The school demonstrates effective practice in creating the conditions required for student success.

	<b>Needs Improvement</b>
	The school has aspects of its practice below expectations and needs supported action to improve student success.

## Context

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Walkaway Primary School is located in the Midwest Education Region in the town of Walkaway, 28 kilometres south of Geraldton and approximately 400 kilometres north of Perth. Established in 1887, the school has been at its current location since 1966.

Walkaway Primary School has an Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage rating of 991 (decile 5). There are 66 students currently enrolled from Kindergarten to Year 6.

The school became an Independent Public School in 2019. The newly formed School Board has established governance guidelines and terms of reference to ensure that it can operate to best effect.

Active support is provided by the Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) whose fundraising efforts result in considerable improvements to infrastructure, as demonstrated by the provision of the recently resurfaced undercover courts. Other facilities include a large art and technology room, nature play areas and brick-paved eating areas.

## School self-assessment validation

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The principal submitted a comprehensive and robust school self-assessment.

The following aspects are confirmed:

- All information uploaded to the Electronic School Assessment Tool (ESAT) by the principal was a result of rich discussions and a shared responsibility for the information provided.
- Staff indicated that reflecting against each of the domains of the School Improvement and Accountability Framework (SIAF) was worthwhile.
- A range of credible evidence was selected for analysis.
- The principal reported that future ESAT submissions will better reflect the distributed leadership model in place.
- Constructive contributions made by staff, students and community members during the school visit added value to the self-assessment and assisted with validation.

The following recommendations are made:

- Consider annotating evidence uploaded to the ESAT, to draw the attention of the review team to targeted focus areas.
- Planned actions for further improvement, as recorded in the ESAT, should be futuristic in nature in order to articulate what the school is going to do next.

## Public School Review

Relationships and partnerships	
<p>The broad consultation process undertaken to establish a shared vision for Walkaway Primary School demonstrates that all stakeholders – parents, students and staff – are valued and their voices are heard.</p>	
Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The School Board is fully conversant with its governance responsibilities, having actively engaged in Board training.</li> <li>• The P&amp;C applies transparent processes to allocate funds. Their cropping program enlists the support of the wider community and a developing relationship between the school and the Walkaway Development Association is proving beneficial to all parties.</li> <li>• Robust National School Opinion Survey data analyses are used to establish lines of inquiry and inform targeted interventions aligned to school priorities.</li> <li>• The school is committed to ensuring that parents are provided with opportunities to learn alongside their children. Parent information sessions, like that for Numero and Triple P, work to maintain open communication.</li> </ul>
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As planned, entrust the Board with the responsibility of promoting the recently endorsed Code of Conduct with the community.</li> <li>• Continue to pursue onsite post-school care opportunities as a mechanism to support working families.</li> </ul>

Learning environment	
<p><i>Walkaway Primary School is a small school with big opportunities. Student Ambassador</i></p> <p>The small, friendly school environment, where every child is known and parents are engaged, results in the sure knowledge that students are safe and cared for by the staff and one another.</p>	
Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As a Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) school, Zones of Regulation and good standing principles are taught explicitly through the health curriculum and reinforced through assemblies.</li> <li>• Comprehensive processes are in place to cater for special educational needs students, including interagency support when required, training in Team Teach for teachers and education assistants, and individual education plans created in partnership with parents.</li> <li>• Student ambassadors express pride in their school and value the leadership opportunities afforded to them.</li> <li>• The introduction of a focus on fostering a growth mindset supports student resiliency development.</li> </ul>
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to reflect upon behaviour management policies and procedures, ensuring common and shared practices are in place and clearly understood by the greater school community.</li> </ul>

## Leadership

The principal is valued for her professional knowledge, proactive nature and caring and supportive attitude. High expectations and levels of accountability are matched by appropriate support to embed a culture of shared leadership.

Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change is managed strategically. Further to Leading School Improvement training, templates aligned to the SIAF domains have been used to reflect upon current circumstances and act as an impetus for change in targeted areas.</li> <li>• Shared accountability for school improvement is reflected in the collaborative development of the school's first business plan, which was tabled with both the School Board and the P&amp;C for their contribution.</li> <li>• Performance management processes are aligned to the AITSL<sup>2</sup> Australian Professional Standards for Teachers. Targeted attention to agreed upon 'big rocks' make up the whole-school foci.</li> <li>• A self-audit against the <i>Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework</i> for two consecutive years has demonstrated progress in cultural responsiveness, with a plan in place to embed resources across learning areas.</li> <li>• A comprehensive staff handbook supports induction processes. Procedures for inducting education assistants are particularly sound.</li> </ul>
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review performance development processes, implementing a robust system that incorporates peer classroom observation and reflection.</li> <li>• Formalise the induction processes for teaching staff as planned.</li> </ul>

## Use of resources

Resource allocation decisions are evidence-based and have student needs as their primary focus. There is a clear and defensible link between budgeting and planning, with funds allocated to support learning area priorities.

Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is sound financial management of the one line budget and detailed asset replacement plan.</li> <li>• Financial processes are transparent and cost centre managers are well versed in purchasing requirements.</li> <li>• Successful grant applications benefit students directly. Sporting Schools program funding allows for specialist coaches in swimming and athletics.</li> <li>• Workforce planning is comprehensive and a gap analysis has identified future staffing needs given a likely reduction in enrolments in the coming years.</li> <li>• Mentoring of a relief manager corporate services demonstrates good succession planning.</li> </ul>
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build upon current teacher expertise to provide specialty area teachers as deemed appropriate by the school community.</li> </ul>

## Teaching quality

A culture of mutual accountability is demonstrated through high levels of professional and personal responsibility. Implementation of the 'big rocks' across the school is proving effective.

Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear learning intentions are shared using WALT<sup>3</sup> and WILF<sup>4</sup>.</li> <li>• SMART targets are set as part of case management group planning to cater for the diverse needs of students.</li> <li>• Whole-school approaches, including the use of Sounds-Write and Springboard programs, are impacting positively upon student outcomes.</li> <li>• The data literacy of staff is sound. A school-wide assessment schedule ensures that evidence-based data collection and analysis processes are formalised, accessible and used to inform planning.</li> <li>• Moderation opportunities are valued highly. Network meetings led by the Geraldton Literacy Strategy Network and use of the Brightpath ruler results in quality professional discussions and shared understandings regarding grade allocations.</li> </ul>
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formalise the delivery of digital technologies by developing a scope and sequence document that identifies the outcomes required at each year and level of achievement.</li> <li>• Pursue ongoing moderation opportunities within the Geraldton Network.</li> </ul>

## Student achievement and progress

Robust data analysis through disciplined dialogue builds a strong understanding of student performance, informs targeted interventions and is reflected upon to gauge levels of impact.

Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NAPLAN<sup>5</sup> data triangulation is comprehensive. PM Benchmark testing and other data collection tools are used in concert with system-wide data to inform strategic direction.</li> <li>• Whilst NAPLAN achievement is sound, the school acknowledged the lack of progress from Year 3 to Year 5 and implemented strategies to combat this. Early indications from Sounds-Write data demonstrate growth.</li> <li>• On-entry Assessment Program data are used to inform planning.</li> <li>• Staff created a data wall as part of their self-assessment against the seven quality areas of the National Quality Standard and are focusing on identified gaps.</li> </ul>
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek external verification of National Quality Standard attainment in 2020.</li> <li>• Pursue the implementation of MiniLit and MacqLit to provide targeted interventions for those students who remain behind their peers in literacy.</li> <li>• Gather data to monitor achievement of the WALK<sup>6</sup> values and to inform a review of PBS.</li> </ul>

## Reviewers

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Kath Ward  
Director, Public School Review

Sarah Baden-Powell  
Principal, Kondinin Primary School  
Peer Reviewer

## Endorsement

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Based on this report, I endorse your school performance rating of 'Effective'.

Your next school review is scheduled for 2022.



Stephen Baxter  
Deputy Director General, Schools

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## References

- 1 Positive Parenting Program
- 2 Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership
- 3 We are learning to
- 4 What I am looking for
- 5 National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy
- 6 We are responsible; Always show respect; Learn, to achieve our best; Keen to cooperate