

2017
Review Findings



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School and Review Details

Principal:

Ms Rochelle Williamson

Board Chair:

Mr George Atartis

School Address:

90 Second Avenue, Rossmoyne WA

Number of Students:

442

ICSEA1

1154

Reviewers:

Ms Georgina Detiuk (Lead)

Mr David Carvosso

Review Dates:

22 and 23 May 2017

Purpose of the Review

The purpose of the Department of Education Services' independent 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://www.acara.edu.au/ resources/Fact Sheet - About ICSEA.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 forwarded the school self-review conclusions to the Department of Education Services one month prior to the commencement of the review.

The Department of Education Services' 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
- the Department of Education's School Performance Monitoring
- Schools Online reports.

Reviewers analysed the evidence presented in the school's 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)?

Rossmoyne Primary School commenced as an IPS in 2015. The school is situated nine kilometres south of the Perth city centre. A partnership has been established with Rossmoyne Senior High School, the Rossmoyne Community Kindergarten and Murdoch University. The school is enriched by its multicultural background with 49% of students having a language background other than English. Online data from My School indicates the school has an ICSEA of 1154 and 71% of Rossmoyne Primary School students were in the top quartile of all Australian students in 2016.

The school is held in very high regard and parents seek to purchase or rent in the area to meet the strict application of the Department of Education Enrolment Policy. The school reports a gradually changing demographic.

- A 2015–2018 School Plan was developed collaboratively with staff and endorsed by the school board. Three key objectives were set within the contextual framework of the school vision and purpose:
 - to make every student a successful learner
 - to have effective teaching in every classroom
 - o for the community to have confidence in the school.
- Self-review documentation during 2015 and 2016 indicates staff asked pertinent questions related to the school plan and aligned with accountability processes.
 Responses considered were:
 - its impact on teaching and learning
 - o the specificity of targets and their relevance to school priority areas
 - how effective teaching and community confidence could be measured
 - o that the plan had been referenced to the Australian Curriculum.

- Consequential action taken for 2017 has been the renaming of the initial school plan to the 2015–2017 Business Plan, shortening it by one year, change of reference to include the Western Australian Curriculum and Assessment Outline, and staff developing operational plans for each of the student achievement evaluation measures. Documented evidence and discussion with staff indicate there is a clear understanding of the business plan and a commitment to thorough operational planning to ensure targets and strategies are scrutinised.
- The school reported preparing the first business plan and setting targets was a new and challenging experience. The school leadership supported by the board chair acknowledge the need for a change in the framework of the next business plan. They conveyed to reviewers the intention to consider the long-term strategic approach for the school, to draw on the school performance data to set smart targets that are challenging, achievable and reflective of the diversity of students.
- Documented evidence was provided to reviewers verifying the school leadership
 has undertaken thorough, reflective, data-informed review processes to address
 all areas of the DPA. Achievements have been recognised and substantiated,
 and areas for improvement identified for future planning.
- The 2015–2017 Business Plan is accessed by the school community on the school's website and is available to staff on the Rossmoyne Primary School 'Connect' Community.

Area of strength

 The processes in place that ensure detailed and thorough school self-review to guide school improvement.

Teaching and Learning

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

- Student achievement targets in the 2015–2017 Business Plan were based on academic achievement, attendance and attitude, behaviour and effort. Staff assessed progress against targets annually using a three-point scale: 'measure met and capable of being sustained into the future', 'progress made towards measure' and 'measure unlikely to be met and may require review'. In the review undertaken in the second Semester of 2016, there were two targets considered as being met and sustainable into the future. These targets were the proportion of students meeting the national minimal standards in National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) to be the same as or better than like-schools (95%–100%), and for the attendance rate of students to be 95% or better. The school's self-review concluded progress was being made towards achieving the other two student achievement targets.
- Primary School (RPS) Standard' which is a target of 50%–60% achieving 'B' grade or above. In discussions with staff, the reviewers noted that staff had come to the realisation that the 'RPS Standard' target is too subjective and future targets need to be comparable with standardised data. The staff also considered they were making progress towards the second target of having the same proportion of students in the top two proficiency bands in NAPLAN as for like-schools (60%). The reviewers noted that in all aspects of NAPLAN assessments in 2016, Rossmoyne Primary School results were well above State averages and equivalent to or better than Western Australian like-schools. The school was aware that Year 5 results in reading were trending downward during the period of the business plan and were implementing strategies to address this. Year 3 results were trending upward and had shown noticeable improvement in 2016.
- It was evident to the reviewers in discussions with staff that there is a strong requirement in the school for the regular monitoring of student performance with ongoing feedback to students and their parents. Aside from the semester reports to parents, teachers used a variety of means to communicate with parents including written diaries and using digital technology and software such as Seesaw, a student-driven digital portfolio program.
- Staff collaboration is strong and is encouraged and supported by the school leadership team. Collaborative planning, curriculum delivery, moderating and

monitoring student performance are purposefully structured and evident at each phase of learning and year level. Common assessment tasks contribute to confidence and accuracy of teacher judgement. However, this task is made difficult because of the number of teachers employed on a part-time basis. Staff engage in an organised process of self-reflection, disciplined dialogue and informed data analysis to evaluate student performance. This is enabled by a judicious allocation of teacher common release time and efficient use of early closure time. Professional learning days focus on building staff capacity related to the direction of the business plan, contemporary pedagogy and delivery of the Western Australian Curriculum and Assessment Outline, and School Curriculum and Standards Authority (SCSA) achievement standards. Exemplars are examined and moderation of student assessments undertaken.

- Evidence provided in documentation and through discussions with the school leadership team, staff and parents clearly demonstrated that the whole-school community has a culture of high expectations. Parents deliberately purchase or rent property in the school's local-intake area in order to attend this school and to progress to highly-regarded secondary schools in the area. Parents are supportive of their children's education and provide support in the form of technology (MacBooks), private tutors for their children (speech therapists, clinical support from Dyslexia-SPELD Foundation) and tuition in extracurricular activities (music, sport, etc.). It was evident to the reviewers that parents, teachers and students all valued education and with a strong desire to achieve excellence in learning outcomes. The differentiation of the curriculum and the catering for the individual needs of students or groups of students has been a priority during 2016 and 2017. Effective individual education plans (IEPs) are developed for students with individual learning needs.
- An effective distributed leadership model is in place providing opportunities for staff to accept, demonstrate and develop leadership skills to sustain curriculum improvement and contribute to career satisfaction. Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined. The school has four Level 3 classroom teachers, each of whom has a leadership role in the school. Learning area committees, enhanced by 12 senior teachers promote pedagogy for effective teaching and learning, develop and support implementation of school plans, interrogate relevant data of student outcomes and programs, guide trials of extracurricular activities and in many cases facilitate a successful change process within the school. There has been a significant shift in leadership from a task-orientated approach to a focus on improving student learning as critical to successful school improvement.
- Evidence was provided of informed transition of students from one year level to the next. Student profile information is discussed between the relevant teachers. New teachers into the school commented on the willingness of long-standing staff to share information and knowledge about students.

- All staff at the school engage in performance management reviews with their line manager. The school has proformas developed in consultation with staff that guide discussions and are based on the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers. Professional learning is linked to performance management and to the strategic initiatives as set out in the school's business plan. Teachers indicated to the reviewers that they felt supported in carrying out their teaching duties. Peer observation as a means of further improving pedagogy in the school is being considered. The implementation of this initiative will further enhance the strong capacity of teaching staff to cater for all children.
- The teachers follow the Rossmoyne Primary School Teaching and Learning Model which is a model based on work by Professor Brian Cambourne. The leadership team indicated that student performance data is increasingly being referred to in performance management discussions with staff. Programs offered in the school are only implemented after considerable research and frequently only following visits to teacher development schools (TDS) specialising in that area of the curriculum. Examples of programs that have only been accepted and implemented into the school after detailed examination and trial are Letters and Sounds, as the synthetic phonics program for Pre-primary to Year 2; the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) program; and Deeply Reflective Engagement and Mastery (DREAM) Project, a project that assists teachers to integrate digital technologies into their teaching practice.
- Thorough processes are embedded in the school's operations which will ensure the sustainability of the ongoing improvement of teaching and learning in the school. The passion and support for education demonstrated by the school community will also ensure that Rossmoyne Primary School remains a school of excellence and of choice. It was evident that all the staff at the school are dedicated and committed to providing the best possible education to all students in the school irrespective of the child's capacity.

Areas of strength

- The staff commitment to excellence in student outcomes irrespective of the child's ability.
- Staff engagement in an organised process of self-reflection, disciplined dialogue and informed data analysis.
- The effective and distributed leadership displayed in the school.
- The strength of the staff collaboration processes.

 The robust research base and networking that ensures the best whole-school program is implemented across the school.

Area for improvement

 The need to establish objective student achievement targets in the next iteration of the business plan.

Student Performance Monitoring

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

- The school undertakes an annual review of the business plan and assesses progress against the targets outlined in the plan. The business plan was also critiqued by a TDS which resulted in changes in line with the expiry of the school's current DPA. Other feedback about the plan has either been actioned or will be taken into consideration in the construction of the 2018–2020 Business Plan. Teachers examined student report and NAPLAN data during professional learning days, staff meeting days and in phase of learning meetings. From discussions held with a range of staff, the reviewers are confident that the targets have been well considered. The reviewers also identified that there was an understanding and desire to improve the target setting in the next business plan.
- Pre-primary to Year 6 teachers interrogate NAPLAN data. Pre-primary and selected Year 1 and Year 2 student On-entry data is evaluated by teachers in these year levels. The school is currently trialling Brightpath as a means of evaluating progress in writing from Pre-primary to Year 2. Teachers also use common assessment tasks and engage in moderation exercises to ensure the school's main whole-school target of 50%-60% of students achieving a 'B' grade equivalent or above, referred to as the 'RPS Standard', is achieved. It was evident to the reviewers that the school leadership team and teaching staff have concluded during review sessions that instead, using standardised assessments across the school would provide a more objective measure of performance, especially in year levels not covered by NAPLAN. The immediate feedback teachers would receive from online assessments would also allow for earlier intervention at the point of need.
- The staff of the school have reviewed the performance of the school and a self-assessment document sets out the findings of this review and identifies future actions. The school leadership team has also reviewed their compliance with the DPA. This is very well documented and has been shared with the school board. Besides the standardised testing previously identified, the school also uses the results from student participation in competitions in languages other than English, Maths Olympiad and the Australian Mathematics Competition. The school's self-assessment document is detailed and transparent and is available on the school's website under the school performance tab.

- The school produces a detailed annual report. The report contains student performance information against the school's academic targets. This analysis is also broken down into subgroups such as gender and language backgrounds other than English. Non-academic targets are also analysed and reported in the annual report. The report is available to parents in hard copy if requested and is also available on the school's website and Schools Online.
- The reviewers are confident, after speaking with the school's leadership team, board members and a range of teaching and support staff that there is an understanding and ownership of processes in the school. The importance of monitoring student performance at the classroom and whole-school level is well understood by staff and evident in the data collected, the analysis undertaken and the documentation provided for this review and available on the school's website.

Areas of strength

- The classroom teacher and whole-school analysis of student performance information undertaken by staff.
- The documented evidence supporting the analysis of the targets in the business plan and the requirements stipulated in the DPA.

Area for improvement

 The need to explore standardised assessments that inform progress in years other than the years in which NAPLAN is administered.

Program Delivery

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

- Evidence through documentation and discussion with staff verified teaching programs are consistent with system requirements and the school is compliant in implementing the Western Australian Curriculum and Assessment Outline.
 Curriculum evaluation, assessment and reporting are in line with SCSA Phase 1 and Phase 2 guidelines for Pre-primary to Year 6. The school continues to implement a quality improvement and reflection process for early childhood education aligned to the National Quality Standard and complemented by the Early Years Learning Framework.
- An ongoing commitment to technology is supported by an Information and Communications Technology (ICT) committee, members of which provide targeted professional learning for staff. An ICT scope and sequence plan has been developed and a teacher is employed to work in a mentor role with staff in classrooms. A 1:1 MacBook program has been introduced for Years 4-6. Of note within the program is the use of the substitution, augmentation, modification and redefinition model to review how the progression of educational technology is impacting on teaching and learning with students developing higher order thinking skills. An iPad strategy is being progressively implemented for students Pre-primary to Year 3. The school library has recently been refurbished and plans are in place to extend its function as a multimedia centre. Staff are increasingly using 'Connect' to communicate and share information from different locations, share and store documents and templates, and set up a specific class page. Class teachers are trialling various technology applications to communicate with parents. These trials are to be reviewed before the school selects a suitable and safe whole-school application for parent communication. Currently the school provides the newsletter to parents electronically, a hard copy on request and to the wider community through the school website.
- National opinion survey data indicated the school provides a high level of care for students. This was confirmed through meetings with staff, parents, members of the school board and students. The school promotes partnerships with colleagues, students, parents and the broader community. Parents value the strong sense of school community. Students commented that they feel safe at the school and that teachers are approachable, cared for them, were prepared to listen and always supported them in their learning. In particular, reviewers noted the awareness and appreciation from students and parents of the opportunities

the school has provided students through specialist subjects and school initiatives such as STEM, a real world program to change the use of a school playground, introduction of the Young Engineers robotics program, DREAM, Pilates, Finger Gym, World Vision Child Sponsorship, science week and market day, River Rangers, school band, orchestra and choir and sporting activities. These programs are detailed in operational plans and support the business plan priorities to enrich the learning environment and extend student learning experiences.

- The school reported minimal time is devoted to behavioural needs of students. This is supported by school records and system attitude, behaviour and effort data. Staff have observed and determined the need for a whole-school focus in providing opportunities for students to develop resilience. A whole-school values program is embedded in school operations, embraced by the school community and complemented by the Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies and Challenges and Choices. Parents commented student values education in the school is transferring to the out of school environment.
- Integral to the civic and citizenship program is the promotion of student leadership through roles as student councillor, peer mediator and faction captains. Training is provided in conflict resolution for peer mediators. Meeting with student leaders confirmed they value the leadership role and that as a leader within the school they have a mentoring responsibility.
- The school has effectively identified and deployed strategies and resources to support student learning, engagement and wellbeing. A pastoral care committee, led by a member of the executive team, diligently and purposefully manages a whole-school approach for students at risk academically, socially, emotionally or physically. There is a commitment by staff to a shared vision of excellence for all children and the development of the whole child is paramount. Pastoral care is recognised as a shared responsibility of the school leadership, teachers including specialist staff, support staff, parents, the school psychologist and external agencies. The pastoral care process includes early identification of students at risk using a range of indictors such as staff observation, teacher judgement, class assessments, data from On-entry, NAPLAN, Integris attendance data and parent discussions. Collation of data is followed by early intervention through development of curriculum adjusted plans, group and/or IEPs. Support and building the capacity of teachers and school-based staff has been provided through a range of professional learning opportunities including setting specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely goals when developing individual and group plans, the School of Special Educational Needs: Disability, protective behaviours and values education. Case conferencing occurs as required engaging the expertise of the school psychologist and referral to external agencies. Student profiles are maintained and there is a handover and

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discussion of student data by teachers at the commencement of each year. Student progress is documented and carefully monitored. A school profile is maintained of students successfully progressing from needing at risk strategies to being determined as no longer at risk.

Areas of strength

- The diligent and coordinated management of the whole-school approach to students at risk.
- The commitment and influence of learning area committees in supporting effective teaching and learning.
- The range of initiatives to enhance student learning experiences.

Resourcing and Support

How well has the school established systems to monitor and review the allocation of resources to meet strategic and operational priorities?

- The school aspires to provide and maintain high quality teaching and learning by
 motivated and capable staff. There is commitment to effective use of resources
 and linking funding to planning and reviewing school priorities. The school
 distributed leadership structure of committees, cost centre managers and teacher
 budgets managed by class teachers have heightened staff awareness of
 resource selection, allocation and responsibility.
- Staff are becoming progressively confident in the use of technology for the
 delivery of the curriculum, within extra curricula activities and use of collaborative
 online teaching resources. The school has employed two ICT technical support
 staff to contribute to the maintenance, efficiency and reliability of technology used
 within the school and to resolve technical challenges as they occur so that the
 use of technology can be maximised in teaching and enhancement of student
 learning.
- Financial and human resources are linked to the business plan priorities, operational plans and special projects, ensuring delivery of education programs that provide all students with the best opportunities for improved outcomes.
 Evidence of a comprehensive process was supported and verified through discussions with staff, the manager corporate services and members of the school board.
- To promote school improvement and facilitate maximum use of resources and expertise the school has developed and maintained meaningful and resourceful partnerships and staff actively participate in extensive networking with other schools.
- An active Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) has supported the school contributing to provision of resources and significant work to improve the school grounds.
- The school has long-term experienced staff who demonstrate a commitment to and enthusiasm for the students and the school community. An increasing number of staff are choosing part-time employment prior to retirement. The school workforce planning has been and is focused on assessing the ongoing sustainability of flexible working arrangements in employment of many part-time

staff. This includes identifying potential gaps in staff expertise in the short and long term and assessing the timeframe in which gaps in staff expertise will need to be addressed. The benefits of staff flexible working conditions are measured against the challenges of these arrangements for implementation of whole-staff programs and teacher collaboration when 66% of teaching staff are employed part-time. Strategies to ensure sustainability of current agreed school policies, processes and practices through impending changes of staff include developing a more comprehensive staff handbook, improving the induction process and developing a Rossmoyne Primary School Teaching and Learning document that includes expected practices in whole-school programs.

- A professional learning policy and plan is in place, as is an associated budget to support school and system priorities and individual staff development. This was particularly evident in the strategic focus of building staff capacity for implementation of the Western Australian Curriculum and Assessment Outline such as train the trainer for humanities, arts and social sciences and a coach for ICT.
- The school has demonstrated that resource management and comprehensive workforce planning are appropriately and effectively targeted to align with the DPA and school priorities. There is an embedded framework for planning, monitoring and reviewing teaching and learning that will ensure student and community participation and staff development are sustainable and able to respond to the current and future needs of the school.

Areas of strength

- The strategic focus of building staff capacity associated with implementation of the Western Australian Curriculum and Assessment Outline.
- The comprehensive workforce plan identifying current and future needs of the school.
- The support provided to staff in ICT and in the considered approach to implementation of any new initiatives.

School Board

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

Findings

- The board comprises six elected parent representatives, four elected staff representatives, the principal and a community representative. Members exhibit a balanced skill set. Discussions with parent representatives showed a passion for the school and a responsible approach to the role in governance. There is a healthy interest from parents to be members of the school board resulting in the need for an election process to be undertaken when vacancies occur.
- In discussions with the chair and parent representatives, the reviewers ascertained that members had a good understanding of the functions of an IPS board. Members had attended training and the board chair exhibits very strong leadership capacity. The board chair was aware of the need to ensure succession planning was undertaken to fill the chair's role at the expiry of his current term of office.
- The minutes and discussions with board members indicate that the board fulfils
 its functions as prescribed in the School Education Act 1999, School Education
 Regulations 2000 and Department of Education policy. The board members
 analyse student performance information, review school policies and oversee the
 allocation of resources in support of student learning and welfare.
- The board endorsed the DPA and the modification to the original 2015–2018 School Plan when research indicated the plan would be best aligned with the period of the DPA and therefore terminate in 2017. Board minutes indicate that members are provided with and scrutinise student performance information. The board also participated in the analysis of the parent, teacher and student satisfaction surveys which are administered biannually.
- A document titled School Board Information Pack allows for all members of the school community to gain an understanding of the board's functions. The document clearly sets out what its responsibilities are and outlines the difference between the role of the school board and the role of the P&C.
- The board receives financial statements on a regular basis and discussions with members gave the reviewers confidence that there was a very good understanding of these reports and an ability to contribute to discussions surrounding the school's finances. Board members also displayed a strong

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understanding of the targets set out in the business plan and the need in the next business plan for these targets to be objective and based on standardised data allowing for better comparison with other schools.

- It was evident from discussions with board members that they were engaged in an ongoing way in the school's self-review process. The board has only been operational for just over two years and the reviewers are confident that the engagement in the school's self-review process will continue to develop. The school leadership team provide the board with detailed material on which to make judgements and the strength of the board results in rigorous examination of this material.
- The board has undertaken a review of its own performance and this is commendable given the short time they have been in operation. The board chair in the school's annual report 2016 writes that the board is now ready to take on a greater role in setting the strategic direction of the school. The report also notes that the board has transitioned successfully from a school council and is morphing from a previous passive and certifying role to a more meaningfully engaged board.
- The members of the board are visible in the school with roles at the school's Anzac Day service and graduation ceremony. Discussions with board members indicated they had considered and demonstrated their willingness to explore other times when they would be visible and accessible to the whole-school community. The enthusiasm and skill set on the board will ensure further exploration of ways to communicate progress towards achieving business plan targets to the broader school community.
- In discussions with parents, teachers and board members it was evident to the
 reviewers that there is a very strong commitment to the school by the school
 community. This commitment is also evidenced by the number of parents willing
 to nominate for board vacancies. This commitment to the school will ensure the
 board's sustainability.

Areas of strength

- The strong leadership displayed by the current board chair.
- The demonstrated commitment and understanding of members in their role on the school board.

Conclusion

Rossmoyne Primary School has embedded a safe, inclusive and supportive learning environment for its culturally diverse student enrolment. Strong partnerships have been established with parents who hold the school in high regard.

A competent leadership team and committed staff have collaboratively established a planning framework underpinned by high expectations, evidence-based self-review processes, professional and innovative teaching and ethical practice. The strong commitment by parents to the education of their children is contributing to high student achievement.

An informed and supportive school board has developed skills in governance and accountability and is poised to contribute to the strategic direction of the school in the development of the 2018–2020 Business Plan.

Declaration

We confirm the information provided is, to the best of our knowledge, true and correct, based on the verification of the evidence provided by Rossmoyne Primary School for the Department of Education Services' independent review.

The principal and board chair have had an opportunity to comment on any matters of fact contained within this document.

Georgina Deticek

Mrs Georgina Detick, Lead Reviewer

29 June 2017

Date

Mr David Carvosso, Reviewer

27 June 2017

Date

Mr Richard Strickland, Director General, Department of Education Services Doto

