



Government of Western Australia
Department of Education Services

Rosalie 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:	Ms Roslyn Kay
Board Chair:	Mr Craig Sharp
School Location:	101 Onslow Road, Shenton Park WA 6008
Number of Students:	559
Reviewers:	Mr Kevin Pilkington (Lead) Mr Graham Rixon
Review Dates:	1 and 2 August 2016
Initial Review:	2013

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?

Rosalie Primary School is located within the municipality of the City of Subiaco, five kilometres from the Perth CBD. The school opened in 1906 and has developed a tradition of developing successful students and partnering with its local community. The school embraces its motto 'Proud Tradition—Shaping Futures' and the vision: 'Our school community supports and challenges our students to achieve their personal best and celebrates their efforts and successes'. The school commenced as an Independent Public School (IPS) in 2011.

The school has a reputation as an outstanding school achieving exemplary results and attracting local and international families to seek homes in the area of Shenton Park in order to enrol their children at the school. The infrastructure of the original school remains in contrast to the more recent addition of classrooms that were needed to accommodate the increasing number of students. Enrolments have increased to around 559 (479 PP to Year 6 and 80 Kindergarten) students despite the loss of Year 7 students to high school at the end of 2014. A steady influx of students with an English as an additional language or dialect (EAL/D) background, whilst adding some academic and teaching challenges, has given the school the opportunity to celebrate the diversity of these cultures. The school currently has 21% EAL/D students in stages 1–3 and, as a consequence, has allocated specialist support in this area. The focus on early childhood education has also resulted in an increase of enrolments in Kindergarten and Pre-primary levels.

The school has an Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) of 1207 and a transiency rate of 16.5% resulting from parents moving into and out of the area. The average attendance rate over the past three years has been 95.2%; well above the State average. Despite the increased enrolment and the diversity in the student population, the school, with the strong support of the School Board and the parents, has been able to maintain its small school community atmosphere that is a part of its tradition.

The detailed workforce plan indicates there are 58 staff at the school occupying either permanent or fixed-term positions with minimal staff turnover. The changing demographics and the IPS status has allowed the Principal to continue to select staff for new or relieving positions that are suited to early

childhood education, technology expertise and assisting students with special needs. Changing needs led to a review of the Workforce Plan early this year. The Principal has identified the key factors affecting staff continuity as maternity leave, retirements and long-service leave.

The development of strong partnerships with the parent community is evident through the Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C), parent liaison members for each class and active fund raising and social networks. The parent voice and support for the school is proactive and affirming. Effective partnerships also exist with other councils and educational and service organisations in the area.

The Board is proactive and fully engaged with the Business Plan, annual reports, review processes and analysis of the school's performance data. The board's membership consists of staff, parents and community representatives who all have a common focus of working with the school to enhance the learning experience for all students.

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?

The Board and teachers are diligent in performing an annual cycle of self-review which judges school performance against performance indicators and milestones of the Business Plan 2014–2016. The Business Plan priorities are: successful students; excellence in teaching; a safe, supportive and sustainable environment; and strong sustainable partnerships. The related targets and milestones are clearly aligned to the Department of Education strategic priorities and have guided the school's annual operational and learning area plans, workforce, information and communication technology (ICT), science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) and financial plans. The targets of the Business Plan associated with student academic performance are reported upon in the school's Annual Report and in intra-school documentation. Detailed documentary evidence and discussion with staff and board members supports the conclusion of the reviewers that analysis of data informs planning. The Business Plan is more indicative of the strategies to be employed and the milestones of implementation that will enable improved outcomes for students. Specific targets are mostly found in the operational plans of the curriculum areas and the phases-of-schooling team planning documentation.

The self-review process focuses on standards and progress and is monitored at individual, cohort and school level. Learning teams, curriculum leaders and school leadership all analyse quality data sets. Comparative data sets enable judgement of school performance against national and State standards. The staff is commended on the comprehensive use of internal and external measurement of student achievement and progress.

The staff demonstrated a clear commitment to and detailed monitoring of how it is meeting the commitments of the DPA. The Board is regularly informed of progress in meeting the commitments of the DPA and Business Plan. Minutes of meetings and discussion with members confirm the information is interrogated and the school is held to account. The Annual Report is the public document that details conclusions drawn.

Through the process of self-review, areas of strength and weakness have emerged. Academic achievement is high across the school but analysis of data has led to specific areas of focus to improve particular skills, for example,

spelling, writing, and intervention at an individual, group, cohort or whole-of-school level. Always, the focus is on each student achieving at their best and celebrating success.

School Performance—Student Learning

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

The Business Plan sets the direction, strategies and achievement indicators to support the staff in achieving goals to prepare successful students. There is a key focus on developing in its students:

- the desire to learn and ability to maximise their educational opportunities
- the capacity to grow academically, socially, emotionally, physically and creatively to their full potential
- a social conscience, recognising the importance of contributing to his/her family, school and the wider community.

The previously outlined priorities, targets and defined milestones of the Business Plan support the attainment of these outcomes. Following a review of a range of comprehensive documentation and discussion with key staff in the school, the independent reviewers were able to verify that significant progress has been made toward the achievement indicators articulated in the Business Plan. The collection and analysis of a comprehensive array of quantitative data has supported the curriculum and learning processes at the school using a range of relevant assessment tools. The staff is commended on the use of a range of data to improve student learning programs and consequently its academic achievement.

Teachers target achievement indicators that define what it is to be a successful learner; a learner who not only achieves well in national testing, but who is deemed successful within the context of his/her existing talents. In working to meet the needs of individual students, teachers have adopted the 'Thinking Classroom' that is complemented by an integrated learning / pedagogical approach. Evidence-based self-review practices that analyse the learning of all students is evident in the data collected for students at risk. Individual and small group case management support is developed and implemented in consultation with classroom teachers, parents, students at educational risk coordinator and as appropriate, external service providers/experts in the field. Underpinning this process of considering each individual's needs is a balance between teacher judgements and the finding of school-based and external assessment results with a cyclic review process.

This is based on school and teacher generated information and standardised assessments of academic and non-academic areas.

The success of the teaching and learning programs is reflected in the outstanding achievements in NAPLAN results. The school's nationally recognised position as the best performing comprehensive primary school in WA in 2014 is attributed to highly engaged students and staff working with a challenging curriculum, specifically designed to meet the diverse needs of students. The school was also recognised as one of four finalists in the 2015 Education Awards 'WA Primary School of the Year' category, in its winning the inaugural 2015 Governor's STEM Award for Leadership Excellence in Science and Mathematics Education and in 2016 being chosen as a Teacher Development School for STEM. The staff is commended on the outstanding student performance standards across the curriculum, benchmarked against national, like schools (both government and non-government) and international standards.

An example of how the self-review and analysis of data has supported student learning is reflected in the response to the 2013 NAPLAN results in spelling. As a result, an achievement target in spelling was set in the current Business Plan. The staff implemented a plan to address this matter and evidence now indicates an overall improvement in spelling across the school. The teachers have now identified writing (vocabulary) as an area to prioritise and monitor in the next Business Plan.

In order to meet the challenge of a changing demographic, while maintaining its standing as a school where students are able to achieve their personal best, the staff has implemented a number of changes. With the large number of students starting school at Kindergarten and Pre-primary there has been significant focus on early intervention involving testing, speech screening and case management of students at educational risk. The on-entry diagnostic tool has been used in Pre-primary to identify students for whom a specific case management plan is required. This testing is done for all students at the beginning of the year and again later in the year. Identification of students at educational risk has resulted in an increased focus on developing detailed individual education plans (IEPs) in consultation and with support from parents. Similar IEPs are developed to support the growth in EAL/D students, complemented by the employment of additional education assistants. The staff is commended on the proactive approach and responsiveness to the needs of students at educational risk.

The administration team (Principal and two Deputy Principals) structure supports a model that operates through learning/curriculum teams and the concept of collaborative leadership. This strong team approach is pivotal in developing action plans and innovative programs that meet the needs of every student in the school. Other leadership positions include curriculum leaders, learning support, leaders of focus areas such as ICT, and leaders of key operations within the school such as the school library and initiatives involving partnerships such as the STEM program. The curriculum planning process is an integral part of the improvement process and involves four stages: gather and analyse data, plan for improvement, teaching and learning, and assessment and reporting. The staff has developed a raft of planning documents, complemented by detailed operational and whole-school plans. The reviewers verified that the school's review utilises a teaching and learning cycle and a data collection cycle. These have provided a structure for teachers in using evidence-based strategies to inform teaching and learning for all students. The Principal is commended on creating a shared leadership structure involving learning/curriculum meetings that enable all staff to actively participate in the planning for improvement in student learning.

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 reviewers were able to verify a shared vision and purpose with teaching and support staff, students, parents and the school board through discussions and interactions with a cross-section of the school community. During the three years of the current Business Plan the focus has been to embed the following integrated priorities into the learning environment:

- Develop a comprehensive information and communications technology (ICT) strategic plan.
- Forge stronger, sustainable partnerships with parents and community as enrolments rise.
- Manage the future needs for school buildings, grounds management and other facilities in response to increasing enrolments and external infrastructure changes around the school.
- Strengthen experiential and nature-based learning opportunities.
- Continue the school's focus on the 'Thinking Classroom' program.'

An analysis of the school's processes and practices clearly indicates that the school has maintained a high level of staff involvement in embedding these priorities. As a result, the reviewers verified, and subsequently commend the staff, on the clear purpose of excellence in the teaching and student learning throughout the school's learning environment.

Visiting classrooms enabled the reviewers to verify rooms are well resourced and provide students with a positive learning environment. Students displayed a respectful attitude to each other and their teachers. It was evident learning expectations are high, with students engaged in their learning and demonstrating pride in their achievement. Reviewers noted the preparedness of students to share their learning with others through various approaches. As a school in a high socio-economic area with a record of excellent academic achievement, the administration team has been careful in the management of financial and human resources. Being an independent public school, under the student-centred funding model, has enabled it to support individual student needs and identified priorities in the operational plans. With NAPLAN data exposing 60% of senior students achieving band 8 in all areas tested, the

administration team identified the need to employ a high-school trained gifted and talented teacher to work with students on higher-order thinking projects, in preparation for high school. Many students participate in the Primary Extension and Challenge program (PEAC) and previously, in the early years, a Junior Extension for Talented Students (JETS) program. A specialist teacher was employed to integrate Science 'Primary Connections', Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) extension programs for Year 6 students. Employing graduates in the school is part of the Principal's planning to ensure the future sustainability of the school's staffing requirements is met. In 2015, four graduates, including one graduate who received top honours in special needs education, were strategically targeted for employment; an area that was identified as requiring further development. These resourcing examples ensure the school maintains its status as an exciting and innovative learning environment. The staff is commended for creating an innovative and caring environment that encourages students to become engaged in their learning, rewards achievement and supports all students to achieve at their personal best.

In order to enhance the learning environment, the Principal has, along with the support of the P&C, resourced the information technologies across the school. As an integrated priority, the staff is in the process of developing a comprehensive ICT strategic plan and is supported by an expert information technology patron. The reviewers recommend the staff continue the development of an integrated IT plan that focuses on enhancing the use of IT throughout the learning environment.

With the changing demographics, the school has become more inclusive of all students who have the opportunity to achieve their potential in a safe and supportive environment. The positive learning environment is enhanced by the provision of specialist programs in physical education, music, French, science and the regular employment of an artist in residence. Community members regularly volunteer to assist in: delivering the *Support a Reader* program, selecting liaison parents for classrooms and the cultural diversity of families and delivering a religious/values program throughout the school. A psychologist is employed to assist in the case management of students at educational risk and supports the behavioural/emotional/social issues that manifest themselves within the student population. Students, with the support of a staff member and a community representative from the local Western Endeavour Rotary group, have formed an EarlyAct club. Through this club students learn to conduct meetings and are motivated to engage with the local

community to raise funds for shelter boxes and causes such as juvenile diabetes.

The latter is a good example of the important focus the school places on developing strong partnerships that will enhance the learning environment. An additional example of these partnerships includes the City of Subiaco—Early Years' Network where the school is a part of a group identifying, advocating and actioning measures to effectively support vulnerable families and, in turn, vulnerable students. Within the school this particular group is supported with a before-school program and a parent liaison is working closely with the EAL/D coordinator to develop programs and support systems for the effective social integration of families into the school community. In addition, the school successfully engages the business, wider community, social and cultural organisations to enhance opportunities and innovation to support student learning. Students are actively encouraged to give back to the community. An example of this is the twenty-year commitment to the *40 Hour Famine*. The school's commitment to environmental sustainability has resulted in Rosalie Primary School being awarded the top WA battery recycling school for the third consecutive year. The City of Subiaco recognises the school as a hub in Shenton Park; has participated in awards for the school, and funded parent activities and contributed to a sustainability garden project. The support of the Science Faculty at UWA is appreciated, with the input from personnel and the use of facilities contributing to increased awareness of research. Partnership with the Western Australian Combined Universities Training Schools to support placement of pre-service teachers provides added flexibility to workforce planning and classroom support. In addition, the school benefits from its association with Perth Modern School and the Shenton Network in professional learning activities.

Another active partnership exists with the P&C. It makes a significant financial contribution to the school, providing funds for laptop computers, library resources, the *Artist in Residence* program, the *Writers' Festival*, *Reading Eggs* program and contributing to the cost of speech assessments for Kindergarten students and additional On-entry Assessments of students in the early years. There is effective communication with the community through *CONNECT*, regular newsletters from the school and the P&C, website and social media. A biennial parent and student satisfaction survey indicates a very high degree of satisfaction with the school's educational opportunities. The results are reported in the annual report and highlights areas of concern that become priorities for the staff to address.

The staff is commended for embedding a vision and purpose for learning based on academic excellence; the '*Rosalie Values*' and pastoral care structure; responding to the changing demographics; integrating technology in learning; and developing effective partnerships between the staff, students, parents and the local community.

School Performance—Sustainability

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

An embedded culture of high expectations and high achievement is the foundation upon which teaching and learning is practised at Rosalie Primary School. The staff is proactive in acquiring and implementing programs of support, extension, early intervention, benchmarking and re-testing. Every student's individual needs are considered in this process of trying to ensure the best possible educational, social and emotional outcomes. The staff is commended for the implementation of programs and measurement tools that enable detailed analysis of the learning of all students to identify areas for improvement.

Discussion held with the Board Chair and board representatives, together with an examination of minutes of meetings held throughout the life of the DPA, confirm that the Board is very engaged, well informed and analytical. It has played a major part in the development of the current Business Plan and is already planning how it can be improved into the next triennium. A wide-ranging skill set held by members ensures expert input to strategic planning. Many members have accessed training opportunities provided by the Department of Education, with a number bringing corporate board experience to the table. Self-review of meeting Board responsibilities, as detailed in the DPA, is discussed at every meeting. The Board is commended for its strong engagement in fulfilling its duties and providing excellent support and guidance to the school.

Genuine distributed leadership is a model of embedded practice. The leadership is consultative, models ongoing self-improvement and provides opportunity for, and fosters leadership development, in others. The milestones of the Business Plan inform a desire for continuous improvement, particularly in striving for excellence in teaching. Teachers are supported through professional learning opportunities and collaborative practices to become more effective in the classroom. The leadership is commended for establishing practices that enable and encourage continuous improvement in teaching effectiveness.

The strategic and well-documented workforce plan identifies the qualities desired in prospective staff members to enable the school to go forward. The selection of staff over the last three years has been strategic and skills

focused. The collegiality and capacity of staff is benefited by adherence to achieving a commonly understood vision, participating in structured performance management practices, peer coaching, mentoring, collaborative planning and the establishment of effective learning communities based upon phases of schooling. Strong internal structures and practices are complemented by participation in established and effective networking between local schools. The Principal is commended on the establishment of effective capacity building practices that lead to improved teaching and learning.

Effective management of resources utilising the entitlements of being an IPS has ensured that programs and initiatives currently in place will continue into the future. Growing student numbers further bolster access to fiscal and physical resources. The employment of specialist teachers and the conduct of several external testing regimes are examples of how the Principal has allocated funding to improve student outcomes.

Celebrating individual effort and success lies at the core of the school's goals. Each student's performance is benchmarked and progress regularly measured and monitored throughout their schooling. The Business Plan presents many strategies that promote student learning with these and achievement targets included in operational plans developed by the staff. The Business Plan and associated operational plans are constantly monitored by teaching staff and school leaders. Student academic achievement, when measured on a whole-school basis against any standard, is at a high level. It is recommended that the next iteration of the Business Plan be quite specific in the inclusion of measurable targets that are based upon improving academic outcomes for students. This will enable the staff to more effectively utilise the evidence base to demonstrate success in student learning against the targets of the Business Plan.

Conclusion

Rosalie Primary School continues to maintain its reputation as one of Western Australia's leading academic performance schools. An empowered and skilled staff that is supported by a strategic leadership group and an engaged Board has enabled the school to live up to its claim of success for all students and to celebrate that effort and success on an individual level. The school can demonstrate it adds value for each child and collectively outperforms like schools on State and national measures. The learning needs of all students are identified through broad-based benchmark testing and followed up by regular monitoring of progress. Intervention, support and extension programs are available to identified students at educational risk.

The collaboratively developed Business Plan and its accompanying Operational Plans are closely monitored and progress toward milestones and targets regularly measured and reported upon. The Principal and leadership team, along with the Board, are cognisant of their obligations outlined in the DPA and have developed a monitoring tool that allows for regular reflection on how well they are meeting their commitments. Progress toward the Business Plan milestones and targets is reviewed at every board meeting and data presented is subject to critical analysis and feedback.

The school offers a comprehensive curriculum and complements it with extra-curricular opportunities that allow for academic and social growth. The development of global citizens, aware of their social responsibility and the need to serve their community, is a focus of the school. Students directly benefit from the combined effect of a staff which strives for quality teaching and learning, effective and informed school leadership, strong partnerships, and an engaged Board. Rosalie Primary School is well positioned to sustain its continuous improvement focus into the next triennium.

Commendations

The following areas are commended:

- the comprehensive use of internal and external measurement of student achievement and progress to inform planning
- the use of a range of data to improve student learning programs and consequently students' academic achievement
- the outstanding student performance standards across the curriculum, benchmarked against national, like schools (both government and non-government) and international standards
- the proactive approach and responsiveness to the needs of students at educational risk
- the creation of a shared leadership structure involving learning/curriculum meetings that enable all staff to actively participate in the planning for improvement in student learning
- the establishment of a clear purpose of excellence in the teaching and student learning throughout the school's learning environment
- the creation of an innovative and caring environment that encourages students to become engaged in their learning, rewards achievement and supports all students to achieve their personal best
- the establishment of effective capacity building practices that lead to improved teaching and learning
- the embedding of a vision and purpose for learning based on academic excellence; the '*Rosalie Values*' and pastoral care structure; responding to the changing demographics; integrating technology in learning; and developing effective partnerships between the staff, students, parents and the local community
- the implementation of programs and measurement tools that enable detailed analysis of the learning of all students which identify areas for improvement
- the Board's strong engagement in fulfilling its duties and providing excellent support and guidance to the school
- the establishment of practices that enable and encourage continuous improvement in teaching effectiveness.

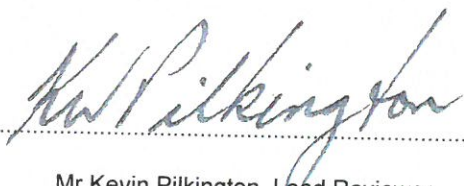
Areas for Improvement

The following areas for improvement are identified:

- the staff continues developing an integrated information technology plan that focuses on enhancing IT use throughout the learning environment
- the next iteration of the Business Plan be quite specific in the inclusion of measurable targets that are based upon improving academic outcomes for students. This will enable the staff to more effectively utilise the evidence base to demonstrate success in student learning against the targets of the Business Plan.

Declaration

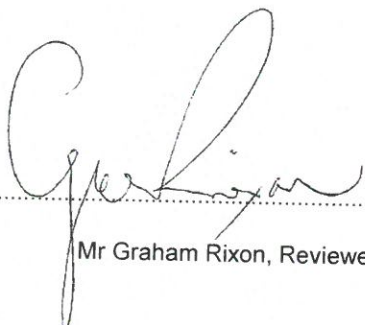
We, the undersigned, hereby confirm that the information provided in this findings document is to the best of our knowledge true and correct and is based on the verification of the evidence provided by Rosalie Primary School as part of the Department of Education Services' independent review process.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



Mr Kevin Pilkington, Lead Reviewer

1 September 2016

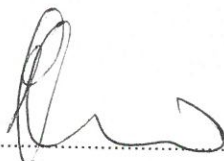
Date



Mr Graham Rixon, Reviewer

1 September 2016

Date



Mr Richard Strickland, Director General,
Department of Education Services

15/9/16

Date

