



In April 2017 City Beach Primary School was reviewed by the Department of Education Services to measure the school's performance as an Independent Public School against its Business Plan.

Normally such reviews occur every three years though, in this case, City Beach Primary Schools, was reviewed more than 12 months early which meant that some of the schools initiatives had not yet had the chance to mature.

The review required substantial preparation and input from the principal, staff, students and the Board and recognised a number of strengths, as well as some areas for improvement.

Areas of strength were listed as:

- Identifying student needs in the early years to ensure appropriate teaching and learning;
- The development of school leaders in curriculum areas who also lead the rest of the staff in planned implementation of the WA Curriculum;
- The efficient allocation of resources to meet the current, and longer term, program implementation; and
- An effective Board that is fulfilling its function and roles in representing the school community.

Noted areas of improvement for the next Business Plan to address include:

- The need to include measurable targets in the Business Plan and focus on areas identified for improving student learning;
- Better alignment of the school's vision, values and beliefs within the day-to-day operation of the school;
- The development of a pedagogy that addresses student progress more consistently;
- The implementation of evidence based strategies and the setting of high expectations of student performance at school, classroom and individual student level; and
- A more targeted approach to data analysis to support classroom planning, teacher moderation of assessments and the effectiveness of teaching strategies.

The benefit of having the schools review earlier than normal is that it allows the school to directly address any identified areas of improvement in the 2018-2020 Business Plan which is currently being drafted. The school Board will incorporate this feedback into the new plan and share it with the school community in 2018.

If you have any questions about the report, or would like to discuss the findings, please contact the principal via [Alison.Jenkins@education.wa.edu.au](mailto:Alison.Jenkins@education.wa.edu.au).



Government of **Western Australia**  
Department of **Education Services**

# City Beach Primary School

**2017**

**Review Findings**



**Independent Review of  
Independent Public Schools**

## Disclaimer

This document reports the findings of the Department of Education Services' independent review.

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## School and Review Details

<b>Principal:</b>	Mr Grant Ward
<b>Board Chair:</b>	Ms Claire Williams
<b>School Address:</b>	30 Marapana Rd City Beach WA 6015
<b>Number of Students:</b>	167
<b>ICSEA<sup>1</sup></b>	1160
<b>Reviewers:</b>	Mr Lindsay Usher (Lead) Mr Noel Strickland
<b>Review Dates:</b>	4 and 5 April 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.

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<sup>1</sup> 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](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*<sup>®</sup> 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)?***

City Beach Primary School is located in the western suburbs of Perth close to the Indian Ocean. The suburb is noted for its quality housing and attracts a number of overseas families providing an international and multicultural addition to the student population. The school celebrated its sixtieth anniversary in 2016, an event that demonstrated strong community support as a feature that has been consistent over time.

The school motto 'Achieving Together with Pride' seeks to develop independent learners and participation in the education programs offered. The school provides Japanese language instruction and is expected to have The Japanese School in Perth co-located in 2018. A strong visual arts program is also a flagship learning area that has established a strong profile for the school.

Student enrolments have shown a decline since 2012. The current enrolment is at 167. The school caters for a small number of gymnasts who attend the Western Australian Institute of Sport.

School staffing has undergone change since 2015 through retirements including senior staff, long service leave and refinements to fixed term teacher appointments. The changing workforce profile did not enable appointments of a number of replacement new staff as a consequence of the declining student enrolment.

The school provides facilities and premises that support the delivery of the curriculum and provide a pleasant and calm working environment.

## Findings

- The 2015–2017 Business Plan was established in conjunction with staff and the school board. It contains a vision, beliefs and values statement that is evident in signage around the school. Reviewers observed that the vision and values were not reinforced in teaching and learning nor evident in student and parent understandings.
- The business plan reflects a holistic view of enhancing broad school directions under three 'strategies': High Quality Teaching and Leadership, Successful Students and Building Effective Partnerships. Within each overarching 'strategy' are focus areas that further define intentions for improvement and operations. Each focus area has strategies for implementation and performance information. Within performance information there are measurable indicators of student

performance against benchmarks in assessments. However, most performance information is related to implementation of strategies with limited or no indicators that may suggest improvement in teaching and learning outcomes. Reviewers, in discussion with leadership and the chair of the school board affirmed that the plan had a very operational focus on student academic performance. Strategies to address below expected student performance against benchmarks are not an obvious feature of the outcomes and strategies. It was affirmed that the structure of the 2018–2020 Business Plan would be more strategic, focus on identified improvement areas and include specific measurable targets. It would be supported by operational planning that impacts directly on classroom teaching and learning, and contributes to improvement and achievement of business plan targets and goals at a school, classroom and system level.

- Leadership, staff and the board contributed to the first business plan that has been in operation since July 2015 after the school became an IPS in February 2015. The results of the self-assessment of progress on planned outcomes have been shared with staff and the board but analysis of improvement had been made more difficult by the absence of measurable outcomes in most focus areas. This is particularly evident in reporting on the success of strategies in improving teaching and learning. Discussion affirmed a need to establish clear, measurable, improvement targets where summative data is available and stated goals/aims for achievement of strategy outcomes using formative assessments.
- The business plan is made available to the community and is the subject of ongoing reporting on progress in newsletters and in the annual reports.

### **Areas for improvement**

- The next business plan includes measurable targets and focus areas identified for improving student learning (progress, achievement, engagement) based on the school's self-assessment of student performance in academic and social domains.
- In the next business plan, leadership, staff, board members and parents consider strategies to better align the school's vision, values and beliefs with the day-to-day operations of the school.

## Teaching and Learning

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

### Findings

- The 2015–2017 Business Plan identifies student performance in National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) as the measure for academic improvement. The achievement target is for all student performance assessments in Year 3 and Year 5 to be comparable or above like-school performance. The target is appropriate in its scope for the school context. However, inconsistent results over time have demonstrated periods of above, at and below expected performance compared to like-schools across both year groups. The data also revealed that similar cohorts have performed well at Year 3 level but below expectations at Year 5 and vice versa. Further examples of inconsistent performance can be found in Year 5 reading which since 2012 has alternated between above expected and below expected like-school performance in alternate years up to 2016. The inconsistent pattern has distorted progress and achievement assessments. For the period 2014–2016, NAPLAN data demonstrates the school was in the ‘lower progress-lower achievement’ quadrant for all assessments when compared to like-schools. In 2013–2015 the data was distributed more into the ‘higher progress-lower achievement’ quadrant for all assessments against like-schools.
- The school has two years of NAPLAN data to enable reporting on the business plan student performance targets. In 2015, Year 3 performance was below expected in all assessments except reading. Year 5 assessments were all at expected levels with the exception of reading which was above expected against like-schools. In 2016, Year 3 performance improved with all assessments at expected levels with the exception of numeracy which was above expected. Year 5 performance was below expected in reading and spelling but at expected levels in other assessments. The variations in student progress and achievement, which also extend beyond the DPA period, are attributed by staff to small cohort sizes of around 20 and cohort differences and that these factors are seen as contributing to the inconsistent student performance over time. Reviewers were of the view that these assertions could not be supported by evidence. An analysis of the quality of teaching and learning in contributing to the considerable variations in overall performance was not a part of the school self-assessment.



- Business and operational planning demonstrates that staff have undertaken a more forensic approach to examining data to influence classroom planning and the professional learning team approach (which includes support staff). This has the potential to develop consistency of practice and common understandings. It is reflected in the school's self-review documentation and assessment of its performance against the target. However, while the fundamentals of teaching and learning to improve performance are in place, staff are in a development phase. Greater consistency is required by staff in the selection and implementation of appropriate strategies that are successful in improving student performance.
- Teaching staff have available to them the necessary range of assessments and strategies to monitor and improve student performance. There is evidence of whole-school processes for identifying and responding to the needs of students requiring additional support for learning and those who require opportunities to enhance their academic talents. This was also evident in the work being done in the early years with On-entry data and interventions planned to support students. The implementation of a tracking process of at risk students and targeted individual education plans (IEPs) are also indicative of the staff focus on intervention and support. NAPLAN data suggests that very few students fall into the bottom 20% category with the challenge being to progress students from the middle to the top 20% category comparable to that of like-schools' performance.
- Discussions affirmed staff expectations of high standards of performance from students. This is reinforced in the vision 'to be a school of excellence' and in beliefs about teaching and learning but not evidenced in student progress and achievement. The 2015–2017 Business Plan also has strategies for student personal excellence, leadership and recognition. While the expectations of a high standard are clearly set, the transition into consistent high performance is still to develop.
- Collaboration is developing between staff and is being assisted by the professional learning team approach to acquiring and sharing practice, peer observations and reflections and common understandings about the development of classroom practices from detailed operational planning. The business plan focuses on leadership and building staff capacity for the development of the professional learning teams and incorporates planning to support operations and ongoing learning.
- Performance management processes as outlined in the business plan are also at a developing stage. The process includes alignment with the business plan and operational plans. Staff have opportunities to visit other schools and reflect on the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers. Support staff engage in

professional learning activities and peer observation feedback. They also reflect on their performance against a competency framework. Peer observation processes are seen by staff as providing added value to their teaching and learning program.

- The business plan sets out a process of 'disciplined inquiry and strategic analysis of data' and has in place strategies for the collection of data and evidence to improve classroom practice and pedagogy. The focus is on NAPLAN assessments, On-entry screening and students at risk identification and intervention. Staff changes and interruptions have not been conducive to the consistent uptake and implementation of strategies and engagement in the analysis of data. However, a range of professional learning activity has provided staff with the opportunities to explore quality practice in a collaborative environment. Consistency in practice and agreement on key strategies is still developing. Staff are also moving towards strategies to focus on differentiation in curriculum delivery and for appropriate interventions to be in place for students requiring support for learning or enhancement of their educational opportunities. Staff displayed enthusiasm and keenness to improve their practice and to learn from experts and practitioners in other schools.
- Ongoing development of professional learning teams and a range of opportunities to provide exemplars of pedagogy through engaging expertise and visiting schools that demonstrate good practice in targeted areas are set out in planning documentation. Leadership affirmed the necessity to develop staff ownership of a 'City Beach way' in pedagogy and practice. This strategy has the potential for sustainability of common practice and improved student outcomes.

### **Area of strength**

- The focus by the school leadership and staff for identifying student needs in the early years through screening and programs to ensure appropriate teaching and learning is supporting the acquisition of literacy and numeracy skills and understandings.

### **Area for improvement**

- The leadership and staff develop a whole-school approach to the development of a consistent pedagogy that addresses student progress and achievement that is inconsistent and often below expectation when compared to like-schools. The implementation of evidence-based strategies, application of common understandings about teaching and learning and the setting of high expectations of student performance at a school, classroom and individual student level is required.

## Student Performance Monitoring

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

### Findings

- School documentation together with discussions with the leadership team, school board and staff confirmed self-review and assessment processes have been established within the usual operations of the school. Data regularly used in the review includes NAPLAN, On-entry testing, PM Benchmark Reading Assessment Resource, EnVision Maths, Diana Rigg spelling, University of New South Wales testing (English, maths and science) and Progressive Achievement Tests (PAT) in science, comprehension and wellbeing. Planned phase of learning meetings are used to interrogate data. However, while the structure and intent of monitoring processes are consistent with the task of identifying areas of performance concern and planning for classroom delivery to support learning, student progress and achievement has not demonstrated the expected benefits from the process.
- Teachers use a range of formative assessments in the classroom to monitor student performance throughout the year. These include the use of concept maps, graphic organisers, whole-school tasks, rubrics, class checklists and moderation tasks.
- Well developed, high quality operational plans are in place to support the development of teaching and learning programs. However, the implementation of these plans has not produced results in student performance data.
- The draft 2016 Annual Report provided to the reviewers included a very detailed analysis of the school's performance against academic and non-academic performance targets, including recommendations for future actions.
- The reviewers were provided with very comprehensive internal self-assessment against all aspects of the DPA and the business plan. These documents gave further evidence of the comprehensive and transparent student performance monitoring procedures used by the school.
- Reviewers are confident that student performance monitoring processes are sustainable as the distributive leadership practices have become more embedded.

**Area for improvement**

- To develop a more targeted approach across the whole school for the analysis of data to directly influence classroom planning, support teacher moderation of assessments and provide evidence on the effectiveness of teaching strategies implemented in improving student learning.

## Program Delivery

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

### Findings

- There is an established program of curriculum delivery in accord with the Western Australian Curriculum and Assessment Outline implementation schedule. The exemplars provided in this Outline are used to moderate student performance.
- The principal is continuing to develop a distributed leadership model, using staff expertise and interest, to ensure staff involvement in, and commitment to the smooth running of the school. This is evident in the development of operational plans, especially for English and mathematics. These outline the use of Diana Rigg (Years K–2) and Words Their Way (Years 3–6) spelling programs and EnVision Maths program. Staff are aware that the EnVision Maths program does not cover all aspects of the Western Australian Curriculum and Assessment Outline and supplement the program with their own planned lessons.
- Staff demonstrated strong commitment to ensuring a safe and caring school environment is in place. The business plan has a focus on developing personal excellence by students, student leadership and strategies to support health and emotional wellbeing. Parents and students acknowledged and appreciated the well-established, safe and orderly environment.
- The staff has developed a comprehensive use of IEPs for students needing adjusted programs. These individualised programs cater for a small number of students not meeting expected standards and a larger group who need extension.
- The art program is based on reusing materials found in the community. This approach is continued with the heavy focus on recycling within the school. The school has a very strong partnership with the Sculptures by the Sea program and organises a sculpture competition within the school. The physical education program includes a wide range of sports and is coordinated with many community sporting organisations. Information and Communications Technology (ICT) infrastructure is growing and staff skills are developing as they recognise the need to integrate ICT into teaching and learning. Leadership acknowledges the challenges associated with staff training to improve capacity and integration.

- The school's Japanese language program has the potential to be boosted with the planned shift of The Japanese School in Perth to the school site. The school expects a strong partnership to be developed.
- The school's stable staff and well developed operational plans and documented school review processes gave the reviewers confidence that current programs are not only sustainable but will be further enhanced.

### **Area of strength**

- The development of school leaders in curriculum areas who not only coordinate budgeting but also lead the rest of staff in the planned implementation of the Western Australian Curriculum and Assessment Outline.

### **Area for improvement**

- Consideration is given to developing formal literacy and numeracy teaching blocks in the timetable in which staff apply consistent practices and well researched strategies to support student skill development and acquisition across all aspects of literacy and numeracy.

## 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

- There is a systematic approach to the review and allocation of resources. The school uses a cost centre approach to the management of resources. Regular reports are made to the school board which closely monitors the school budget.
- Data is used to inform decision-making in the budgeting process. Funding is allocated in accordance with school planning priorities.
- A very detailed workforce plan identifies trends and possible positions to be filled. The workforce profile indicates a cohort of long serving, experienced staff. The focus of the plan is to address the possible retirements of staff and the retention of specialist teachers. Strategies have been identified to address these issues.
- Both the principal and school board discussed the planned transition of The Japanese School in Perth onto the City Beach Primary School site. While it is believed that this will be positive for the school, the school is anticipating that it could also create issues regarding the sharing of facilities and is planning for this possibility.
- The reviewers are confident that the current programs and level of resourcing can be maintained as efficient use of the one-line budget has enabled the establishment of sufficient reserves of funds. Also, the school does not rely on external resourcing to fund programs.

### Area of strength

- The efficient allocation of resources to meet longer term and day-to-day program implementation.

## School Board

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

### Findings

- An effective school board is in place with representation from six parents, three staff members and one community member. Five new board members were appointed in 2017 (three parents and two staff). Parent board members are subject to nomination and election processes. The board chair is the inaugural chair and retains the position and provides continuity for 2017. Board members have a range of backgrounds suited to the purpose including media and marketing skills.
- The meeting with board members provided an opportunity to demonstrate understanding of the functions and role of the board and its participation in reviewing the progress of the school in meeting DPA requirements, providing information for and endorsement of the 2016 Annual Report, reviewing school performance information and the school's self-assessment, engagement in staff, parent and student satisfaction surveys and the independent review of the school.
- The board contributes to newsletters and the annual report, participates in school functions and engages in the analysis of information received from parent entry and exit surveys. In addition, meeting minutes are posted on the school website which also contains a board email address for direct parent communication.
- The board minutes and discussions demonstrated that the board receives relevant reports and seeks further information as required. National Quality Standard audit and school operational plans were also reviewed. The board was presented with the school self-assessment and briefed on the DPA summary for the independent review. Board members demonstrated a strong understanding of the business plan focus area outcomes and the assessment of progress against targets and the implementation of strategies. Discussions with reviewers revealed their participation in training and the positive outcomes of their own evaluation of board performance.
- The strong community interest in seeking board membership is an indicator of the ongoing ability to attract members with appropriate skills and experience. In addition board practices are well embedded with training for new members provided from multiple sources to ensure a quick uptake of an understanding of functions.



**Area of strength**

- The board chair and members in establishing an effective board that is fulfilling its functions and roles in representing the school community.

## Conclusion

City Beach Primary School focuses in its planning on building partnerships with the community and using opportunities to acknowledge the school's successes. It has strong community support as evidenced by high level participation for school activities, an active Parents and Citizens' Association involved in fund raising for the school and well-regarded community representation on the school board. Parents and students provide positive endorsement for the school's ongoing programs, its positive learning environment and direction.

Parents acknowledge that student academic performance requires improvement and are supportive of strategies outlined in school planning to improve student learning. Leadership and staff have acknowledged the variable student performance outcomes and demonstrated the capacity to change school processes. While they are actively seeking change to benefit student learning, results are yet to meet expected standards.

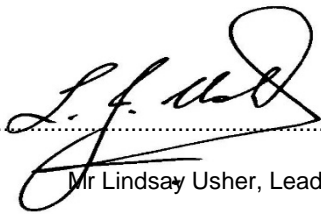
There is a developing recognition by staff that students have the capacity to improve their performance as a result of the appropriate pedagogy applied consistently. This is supported by a renewed focus on enhanced leadership opportunities for staff and targeted professional learning.

The challenge for staff is to commit to ensuring that all learning needs are being catered for to enable all students to reach their potential.

## 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 City Beach 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.



Mr Lindsay Usher, Lead Reviewer

17 July 2017

Date



Mr Noel Strickland, Reviewer

14 July 2017

Date



Mr Ken Perris, Director  
Independent Public School Review

17 July 2017

Date