



Department of
Education

Shaping the future

Armadale Senior High School

Public School Review

Public School Review

Purpose

All Western Australian public schools are reviewed by the Department of Education's Public School Accountability directorate. A review gives assurance to the local community, the Minister for Education and Training and the Director General about the performance of public schools in delivering high quality education to students. The review acknowledges the achievements of the school and gives feedback to support the Principal and staff with their improvement planning.

Initially conducted on a 3 year cycle, subsequent reviews are determined to occur on a one, 3 or 5 year timeframe.

The Principal provides the review team with a self-assessment of the school's performance based on evidence from the school. Information to be validated by the review team is considered before and during the school visit. This forms the basis for the Public School Review report and determines when the next review will occur. The report is provided to the Principal and the regional Director of Education.

Expectations of schools

The Statement of Expectation (the Statement) makes clear and public the expectations and responsibilities of schools and the Department of Education (the Department) in student achievement and progress.

The Statement is between; the Department, represented by the Director General; the school, represented by the Principal; and is noted by the school council/board, represented by the Chair.

The Statement sets out the expectations of Principals in relation to the delivery of the 2020-2024 strategic directions *Every student, every classroom, every day*, and *Building on Strength*.

The Statement will underpin each school's strategic planning and self-assessment and will form part of the school's Public School Review. It will also support the Principal Professional Review.

Public School Review – The Standard

A Standard has been developed across the domains of the School Improvement and Accountability Framework to describe essential indicators of performance. The selection of the indicators is based on literature research and historical reviews of school performance in Western Australian public schools.

The purpose is to better ensure that judgements about student performance are standardised and objective. Indicators describe what is evident in schools functioning 'as expected' within each domain.

The Standard defines the expected level of school performance. Judgements are made in relation to the Standard. External validation is also based on evidence presented relating to the Standard.

For further information or resources in alternative formats for people with accessibility needs, please contact PublicSchoolAccountability.PublicSchoolReview@education.wa.edu.au

Context

Armadale Senior High School is located approximately 35 kilometres south-east of the Perth central business district, within the South Metropolitan Education Region.

The school has an Index of Community Socio Educational Advantage rating of 934 (decile 8).

It currently enrolls 716 students from Year 7 to Year 12 and became an Independent Public School in 2015.

Armadale Senior High School has the support of the School Board and the Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C).

The first Public School Review of Armadale Senior High School was conducted in Term 4, 2019. This 2024 Public School Review report provides a current point of reference for the next cycle of school improvement.

School self-assessment validation

The Principal submitted a comprehensive and rigorous school self-assessment.

The following aspects of the school's self-assessment process are confirmed:

- As this is the second cycle review, the leadership commenced the self-assessment process with discussions relating to identified areas for improvement in the 2019 PSR report. This was viewed as a prudent measure, applying prior knowledge to the 2024 review.
- The commitment of staff to the review was exemplified by the level of enthusiasm and interest demonstrated by those attending each domain meeting during the validation stage of the process.
- Framed by the Standard, comprehensive domain overview statements were complemented by a range of statements for each domain foci point. This provided an outstanding account of the 2 year journey the school has been on since 2022.
- For each domain, the Electronic School Assessment Tool (ESAT) submission included a comprehensive selection of evidence accessed through digital links. The contents of each link were clearly described in terms of content and purpose.
- During the validation visit, input from a broad cross-section of staff including, school leaders, teachers and support staff, all provided an optimistic assessment of the school's future. This was complemented by very positive and insightful comments from a range of students from Years 8 to 11.
- School Board members, parents and community representatives with a deep understanding of the school's history, elaborated on the emerging school culture and gave an amplified acknowledgement to progress the school has made.

The following recommendations are made:

- For future Public School Reviews give consideration to differentiating the volume of content prepared for each domain in the ESAT submission. While all domains are important, a school can determine that at a point in time, a greater focus may be required on some over others.
- Continue to leverage the use of technology for data collection and analysis to streamline processes and reduce administrative workload.

Relationships and partnerships

Organisational success for schools is fostered by placing an emphasis on building and maintaining high levels of interpersonal relations between staff and shaping imaginative and productive relations with its local community. This includes partnerships with the City of Armadale, allied government agencies and local industry groups.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- At the core of the school's moral purpose is providing all students with supportive pathways to develop their potential and achieve success. By extension this is positively influencing the image and reputation of the school throughout the Armadale community.
- The building of staff morale has influenced strengthening collegial links across learning areas. There is a sense of staff alignment and positivity throughout the school, creating trusting and productive relations.
- The School Board, representative of parents, staff and community, is fully conversant with its governance responsibilities, sure in its practices and supportive of the school ethos. They are enthusiastic advocates for the direction the school has taken in the last two years.
- Co-located with the Armadale Senior High School Education Support Centre, an authentic partnership is exemplified by shared facilities, collaborative decision-making, inclusive and shared student support programs. There is genuine respect shared between staff across the campus.
- The partnership with local primary schools has focused on a targeted approach to the transition from Year 6 to Year 7. This includes establishing an after-school Year 6 club to identify students who would benefit from extra transition days. Parents expressed appreciation for this initiative.

Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Maintain the focus on connecting with Aboriginal families and providing opportunities for student voice.

Learning environment

An increasing calmness prevails across the school and in the learning areas. Staff understand the connection between good pedagogy, behaviour education and student support. Staff identified the student services support team as highly professional, noting students also voiced strong support for the work of the team.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The conditions for learning are defined by establishing a calm order, mutual respect, high expectations and strong relationships that combine to engender pride in the school. The staff have teamed to create a high level of internal collaboration to deliver a point of difference public service to the Armadale community.
- Staff care for their students. Following a thorough review of student support services, it has redefined its ethos of student support and cultural inclusivity. A team-based approach to student behaviour, reducing variability in classrooms and fit for purpose student engagement programs are a feature of the school.
- Student empowering initiatives including, the Chrysalis program for disengaged Year 8 and 9 students, the mentoring Clear Path Jiu Jitsu program and Deadly Sista Girlz program developing strong Indigenous women, have had a profound impact on building deeper student relationships to address their need for connection and belonging.
- A student profile has been created for every student with staff sessions dedicated to familiarising themselves with new students prior to commencement. The school's case management model and Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) has been recognised as best practice by Statewide Services.
- A key focus in creating a psychologically safe school environment has been raising awareness of student minority groups. Taking a values-based approach to addressing discriminatory behaviour towards at-risk students, the school has adopted 'We Are Accepting' as one of its 4 school values.

Leadership

Successful schools have a strategic approach to embedding the development of leadership capacity and capability across all layers of the school. The executive leadership has incentivised the staff appetite for undertaking leadership roles. Where previously they were hesitant, staff are now enthusiastic.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Leaders are contextually responsive and agile in their purpose, vision and strategy. The challenging operating environment is well understood yet leaders choose to see the school as being laced with opportunity for growth and development.
- Leadership is distributed across the school and connected with a collective intent. It is driven by a culture of professional responsibility, accountability and obligation to each other and the community it serves. This collective spirit is underpinned by strong values, mutual trust and shared learning.
- The spirit of staff teamwork is exemplified through the quality of collaboration between teachers and education assistants (EAs). This extends from the classroom to specialised committees where teachers and EAs share their respective skill and wisdom for the benefit of students.
- The leadership has developed a compelling change narrative which clearly resonates with staff, parents and students. This has been fortified by genuine consultation with the School Board and synergy between structures and systems that ensure that change is well paced.
- The executive leadership has identified middle leaders as being critical to school success. Significant investment has been made in middle leader growth and development, the allocation of new roles, external training and in-house modelling.

Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Continue to build instructional coach support for staff to enact the business plan intentions in every class.

Use of resources

Schools that are well organised and manage resources strategically, optimise responses to student needs. Effective and efficient daily operations are overseen by a strong partnership between the Principal and manager corporate services (MCS) and supported by an informed and capable Finance Committee.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The Finance Committee has played a proactive role in supporting the school executive and MCS to make timely decisions designed to meet the needs of all students. The committee understands the imperatives for achieving high levels of fiscal probity and applying sound governance of workforce management principles.
- Integrity is embedded in all aspects of the school's administration systems and controls. Sound accountability checks and balances are applied to budget prioritisation to ensure all student needs are addressed.
- By successfully pursuing additional funding streams, the school has been able to augment student programs offered. The suite of programs made possible by external funding includes, but is not limited to, the Robotics program, Pedal Prix, Breakfast Club and the Your Move program. Notable was the effort by staff to be awarded Schools Plus funding for 3 years for the innovative Chrysalis program.
- An aging building infrastructure has been identified as a key focus of maintenance and upgrades. Priority has been given to modernisation and refurbishment to lift the learning environment for students and staff.
- The school understands the importance of having technology assets capable of delivering ICT¹ support to staff and creating exciting opportunities for students to stretch their imagination. Major advances in the quality and robustness of ICT infrastructure have flowed from investment in a network support coordinator.
- The highly valued Full Service School (FSS) is fully engaged with the school. Support with the management of funds, as outlined in the Funding Agreement, is provided to the FSS governance committee.

Teaching quality

Teachers and EAs know their students extremely well and are deeply committed to building a school-wide culture of learning. Focus on continuous improvement in the craft of teaching practice has been a priority to enable every student to achieve success.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- While in the early stages, the school's pedagogical framework has staff buy-in and connectedness. Through a multi-tiered approach, staff capability is being built to reduce variability in classrooms. The school has been engaged in Leading Cultures of Teaching Excellence with a core group driving Teaching for Impact.
- A cultural shift has been embarked upon to address the misalignment of learning area grades. The key driver for this change has been achieved through the high levels of trust in the leadership's school improvement narrative. Identifying opportunities for professional growth has gained momentum.
- The school improvement agenda has been well-served by an intentional and unambiguous focus on data. The school-wide self-assessment methodology is based on selecting reliable assessment tools, efficient data collection processes, and transparent feedback loops to create dynamic responses to evolving needs.
- Staff use data to create student profiles for each class. The profiles not only inform whole-class differentiation, but also group and individual education plans. To this end staff are also supported through the targeted learning services team which uses a MTSS approach to shape its purpose and value.
- An extension and enrichment program called Aspire has been created. Strategic promotion of this program starts with engaging primary schools, appointing a program coordinator and head of learning area support. The program is reflecting a stronger take-up of ATAR² courses.

Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Continue to strengthen Teaching for Impact by maintaining regular peer observation opportunities.

Student achievement and progress

This school is focused on ensuring all students have success while recognising that success looks different for every student. To this end, the school is developing its capacity to select fit for purpose assessments, forensically analyse data for performance gaps and plan for individual and cohort improvement.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The school acknowledges there are achievement and progress gaps apparent in the data. In targeted areas such as OLNA³ achievement, targeted intervention has seen significant progress being made.
- The formation of a directions and pathway team has shone a light on the need for critical analysis of data to inform discussions with students in terms of their aspirations and preferred pathway. The Aspire classes are broadening the school's capacity to challenge the view that it only caters for VET⁴ students.
- Through collaborative support made available through School Curriculum and Standards Authority (SCSA), head of learning areas are implementing a strategic and coordinated approach to moderation.
- There have been encouraging improvements in senior school performance from 2022 to 2023. WACE⁵ data shows the school closing the gap with similar schools, improving WACE attainment by 11 percentage points. The number of WACE eligible students who completed 4 or more subjects or a Certificate II or higher, increased from 65% to 95% in the same period.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Continue to enhance grade moderation and alignment using SCSA Judging Standards.
- Continue to build staff skills in developing differentiated of assessment tasks, rubric design and the provision of feedback to students and families.

Reviewers

Rod Lowther
Director, Public School Review

Ryan Govan
Principal, Butler College
Peer Reviewer

Endorsement

Based on this report, I endorse the commendations and recommendations made by the review team regarding your school's performance.

Your next school review is to be scheduled for 2027. You will be formally notified in the 2 terms leading up to your school's scheduled review.



Melesha Sands
Deputy Director General, Schools

References

- 1 Information and communications technology
- 2 Australian Tertiary Admission Rank
- 3 Online Literacy and Numeracy Assessment
- 4 Vocational Education and Training
- 5 Western Australian Certificate of Education