



Government of Western Australia  
Department of Education

# Yuluma Primary School

2018

Review Findings



Independent Public School Review

## Disclaimer

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## School and Review Details

<b>Principal:</b>	Mr Kim Pitts-Hill
<b>Board Chair:</b>	Ms Wendy Whalan
<b>School Address:</b>	21 Ambrose Street, Innaloo WA 6018
<b>Number of Students:</b>	224
<b>ICSEA<sup>1</sup></b>	1016
<b>Reviewers:</b>	Ms Cris Sandri (Lead) Ms Denise Hilsz
<b>Review Dates:</b>	27 and 28 March 2018

## Purpose of the Review

The purpose of this 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 provided the school self-review conclusions to the reviewers one month prior to the commencement of the review.

The 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
- School Performance Monitoring
- Schools Online reports

Reviewers analysed the evidence presented in the school 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)?*

Yuluma Primary School was established in 1997 following the amalgamation of North Innaloo Primary School and Birralelee Primary School, gaining IPS status in 2015. With an ICSEA of 1016, the school is currently placed in the fourth decile of socio-educational advantage.

The community continues to be culturally diverse with 37% of students from language backgrounds other than English, and 10% Aboriginal students. Student enrolment as at January 2018 is 224 and increasing. Overall student attendance rates remain similar to those of like-schools and Western Australian public schools, but a school-wide transiency level of 30% annually has been identified by the leadership team as impacting on the overall learning of some students.

### Findings

- The DPA requires that the business plan outline the long-term strategic approach for the school and describes key focus areas, strategies, school performance and student improvement targets intended to have maximum impact on overall school performance. The school's 2015-17 Business Plan does not reflect the requirements as described in the DPA.
- The Department of Education strategic plan and focus documents were cited by the leadership team as key references in the direction setting of the 2015-17 Business Plan. Though not evident, focus areas, goals, targets and timelines of the business plan were developed by staff and the board in responding to and working within these system directions.
- According to the leadership team, a strategic long-term approach was not taken in developing the 2015-17 Business Plan in order to address a broad range of areas and maintain simultaneous pressure for change. As a result the focus areas for the business plan were curriculum, staff development and community. This resulted in 18 curriculum areas, two staff development areas and four community areas being identified with each area having a distinct set of goals and targets.
- The 2017 self-review of the 24 goals of the focus areas identified that all but five were met. Stated targets were not reviewed. Recommendations for the next business plan were made following the review.

- The leadership team, staff and board have acknowledged that: most of the current focus areas should move to operational plans; fewer and key focus areas be identified after discussion with staff and the board; operational planning should align with the business plan and classroom planning; and targets should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time limited (SMART). This would ensure the next business plan outlines key priority areas to better reflect the long-term strategic direction of the school.
- Progress against all aspects of the DPA was reviewed and rated by the leadership team and staff from the whole-school and classroom perspectives. Decisions to address these findings are being considered.
- The current business plan is available to the school community on the school website, electronically on request or as a hard copy in the front office.

### **Areas for improvement**

- Ensure the next business plan reflects the requirements as described in the DPA.
- Establish academic and non-academic targets for the next business planning cycle that are explicit, clear, responsive to evidence and more effectively and quantitatively measure and evaluate student learning outcomes and overall school performance.
- Ensure the business plan is more closely aligned to Department of Education strategic planning.
- Ensure the school's operational planning and documents, classroom planning and accountability requirements within a whole-school focus align with the business plan.

## Teaching and Learning

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

### Findings

- The teaching and learning area in the business plan includes measurable targets in literacy, mathematics, science, history, Aboriginal education and attendance.
- The business plan includes one broad literacy target that “by Term 4 of 2017 students in Year 3 and 5 will achieve at or above like-schools in all areas of National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN).” The target was not met. Results over the business plan cycle were below like-schools in all literacy areas in Year 5 and below like-schools in Year 3 writing. The Year 3 results met or exceeded like-schools in reading, spelling, and grammar and punctuation in 2015 and 2016. The 2017 results in these areas; however, were below like-schools.
- Support programs and strategies have been implemented in the early childhood years to address inconsistencies in student achievement. The staff recognise the need to sustain these levels of progress and achievement through to Year 5.
- The mathematics target that “by Term 4 of 2017 students in Years 3 and 5 will achieve at or above like-schools in all areas of NAPLAN.” The target was not met. Results within the cycle in Year 3 and Year 5 were below like-schools except in 2015 where Year 5 was the same as like-schools.
- The science target states “by the end of 2017 students in Years 3 and 5 will demonstrate achievement at or above that of like-schools in science tests conducted at State or national levels if available.” Progressive Achievement Tests (PAT) science scores were used to assess performance against the target. The Year 3 achievement was consistently lower than the comparative normed cohort; however, the Year 6 achievement was similar or better. The progress and achievement for the stable cohort improved over the period. The target was partially met. The Year 6 and stable cohort results reflect progress and improved achievement in science.
- The history target states “students in target years demonstrate levels of achievement that are judged satisfactory and above by the end of 2017.” The target was met and was confirmed based on the grades from semester reports.

## Yuluma Primary School

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- A target was set to improve attendance being “student attendance levels will be the same or better than like-school levels for the whole-school and subgroups.” The target was met for non-Aboriginal students at 93.8% the same as like-schools; however, Aboriginal student attendance was lower at 82.8% compared to 88.8% in like-schools. The school acknowledges that ‘at risk’ attendance levels of some students impacts on their progress and achievement and sustained attendance programs and strategies need to be maintained.
- In the focus area of Aboriginal education, the target states “the difference between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal achievement levels in Years 3 and 5 in literacy and numeracy is less than the previous year.” The target was met, and the school demonstrates a commitment to sustained improvement in progress and achievement supported by attendance strategies, building family relationships and continued implementation of the Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework.
- Discussions with staff and classroom visits confirmed a positive commitment to quality teaching, the development of engaging learning environments and effective teaching and learning relationships between staff and students.
- Collaborative planning and performance development happens; however, there is minimal formalised structure and accountability to ensure it supports the direction of the business plan. The principal confirmed that this is an area for development, to support quality teaching and improved student outcomes.
- High levels of resourcing support the needs of all students. The Students at Educational Risk (SAER) policy and procedures led by the deputy principal provides case management, individual education plans and liaison with external agencies, parents and class teachers. Effective intervention and support is provided by the school psychologist, phonological awareness leader, chaplain and Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) leader.
- An effective collaborative structure is developing and this will be strengthened with the establishment of a distributed leadership model, formalised meeting procedures and accountability linked to the strategic plans.
- All staff participate in a performance management process which is linked to the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers. The self-reflection process enables staff to evaluate their performance and identify professional areas of improvement. The principal confirmed that linking the process to the targets set in the business plan would strengthen accountability for student progress.

- Operational plans have been developed to support all curriculum areas. The school confirmed that they would be improved by explicit links to the business plan, accountability and whole-school commitment to full implementation of agreed requirements.
- A stronger focus on the development of expert teaching skills supported by deep understanding of the requirements of the curriculum and evidence-based practice will enhance the quality of teaching and learning programs.
- Following detailed analysis of performance against targets, school leaders and the board shared their intention to approach future target setting with care to ensure it is both strategic and purposeful. Strategically designed targets will measure the impact of programs and strategies on student learning leading to evidence-based planning for improvement.
- The continued development of staff, effective collaboration, distributed leadership and the support of the board will ensure the sustainability of the delivery of an appropriate curriculum and ongoing improvements in student performance.

### **Areas of strength**

- The inclusive and caring school culture where students are provided with opportunities to learn and grow in a safe environment.
- Highly effective SAER and pastoral care programs.

### **Areas for improvement**

- Develop SMART targets in the business plan which will measure and guide teaching programs and strategies to improve student learning.
- Implement a distributed leadership model with clearly identified roles to engage teachers in leading a collaborative approach to implementing and reviewing programs, data and strategies to improve student outcomes.
- Ensure that the performance management process supports the implementation of the business plan and accountability for student progress.
- Give targeted consideration to maximising the potential of high achieving students.

## Student Performance Monitoring

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

### Findings

- The reviewers confirmed that the principal and deputy principal work with staff and board members to maintain a collaborative process interrogating and analysing NAPLAN and other data. The process of recording longitudinal and comparative data, analysis and action processes requires clarification and structure to ensure collaborative and effective use of data to lead improvement.
- A school-based assessment schedule sets out the whole-school data collection timeline for each year which provides the basis for gathering information relating to individuals, cohorts and school trends. The schedule includes a variety of assessment tools, underpinned by a timeline for testing. A whole-school system for recording and sharing the resulting data, analysis and actions would give the school useful and accessible information to support engagement in decision-making as part of the school's cycle of self-review.
- Findings from the self-review process have resulted in the development and implementation of a range of programs and strategies to improve student outcomes and include literacy and numeracy blocks, guided reading, Talk for Writing, Sound Waves, Think Mental and Oxford Maths. Operational plans in literacy and numeracy detail the implementation and assessment process of the programs and strategies. Discussions with teachers and classroom visits confirmed the use of the programs and strategies listed above.
- Teachers use a variety of monitoring functions to inform their classroom practices and to provide relevant student performance feedback. Class teachers collect, analyse and judge performance data to inform planning. The school is committed to a high care approach and individual education and behaviour plans are used effectively to support students at risk.
- As indicated in the school performance and monitoring system data, teacher grade allocations are not aligned with NAPLAN student achievement or like-schools in English, mathematics, science, and humanities and social sciences. The school has recognised the need to further address teacher learning and practice in this critical area of assessment. Moderation and the development of a shared understanding of the standards associated with the Western Australian Curriculum and Assessment Outline would lead to consistency in making judgements for academic grades.

- A focus on early intervention has led to careful analysis of On-entry assessment data and the implementation of a phonemic awareness program. Regular screening, teacher collaboration and small group programs implemented by a highly effective teacher assistant is reflected in improved literacy skills in the early years.
- The school's self-assessment audit against the National Quality Standard indicated the school is working towards meeting Quality Area 3 (physical environment), Quality Area 6 (collaborative partnerships with families and communities) and Quality Area 7 (governance and leadership) and that all other standards are being met. An external validation of the self-review audit by the Office of Early Childhood Development and Learning, Department of Education is planned for 2018 to confirm these findings and provide further direction.
- The annual reports have been completed and made publicly available. The reports provide a wide range of relevant information; however, there is no clear link to the business plan or details of the performance and achievement of the school relating to priorities and targets which is a requirement of the DPA.

### **Areas for improvement**

- Implement a well-structured systematic monitoring process to record and share data, analysis and actions to strengthen the self-review cycle.
- Develop practices to align teacher judgements to student progress and achievement.
- Ensure annual reports adhere to the requirements of the DPA.

## Program Delivery

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

### Findings

- At Yuluma Primary School the education programs are designed and delivered to meet the needs of students and are in accordance with the requirements of the *School Education Act 1999*, *School Education Regulations 2000* and the *School Curriculum and Standards Authority Act 1997*. The Western Australian Curriculum and Assessment Outline has been implemented in line with the mandated timelines.
- Interviews with staff, observations in classrooms, and planning and review documentation show the school is implementing the Western Australian Curriculum and Assessment Outline and the Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework.
- Day-to-day management of the school is highly efficient and supports a safe and positive school environment for students, staff and parents. All staff demonstrated a high level of professional and personal commitment to the students and this is reflected in the excellent organisation and presentation of all areas of the school.
- Positive behaviours and social and emotional development are promoted through the Values and Virtues Program and PBS. Feedback from students, staff and parents reported the development of a positive school ethos embedded into school and class practices. The programs promote explicit behaviours in classrooms, transition time, playground and other settings with ongoing monitoring and recognition through awarding of tokens and certificates. The success of these programs supports a safe and supportive learning environment for a diverse group of students. This was confirmed in observations of students in a range of activities and situations.
- The behaviour management policy supports student care, wellbeing and safety. It includes rights and responsibilities and a strong focus on respecting and caring for ourselves and others. Student behaviour data during this period reflects reduced incidents of suspension and critical incidents. Feedback from students, staff and parents confirmed improved behaviour standards.
- Student services and pastoral care is led by the deputy principal supported by school psychologist, PBS teacher, chaplain and relevant agencies. Policy

documentation sets out procedures and support arrangements for students identified as being at risk. The school provides significant resources to ensure additional teacher assistant time and professional learning to assist students and staff. Staff and parents gave positive feedback on the support, commitment and high levels of care in this area.

- Programs in art and music are delivered by specialist teachers in Years 1–6 and the Japanese program runs from Pre-primary to Year 6. Operational plans have been developed in each area with effective assessment practices. The professional commitment of the specialist teachers is highlighted in the quality of their programs, classroom practice and a range of additional enrichment activities. These include Taiko drumming group, Japanese garden, instrumental groups, choir, art displays and Asia Literacy. The Japanese program holds Teacher Development School status and significant numbers of students gain special placements in Japanese, art and music programs in public secondary schools.
- The chaplaincy program is supported by YouthCARE. The chaplain works in the school two days each week providing pastoral care support to the school community through individual and small group sessions. The chaplain is an integral part of the individual care approach which is applied in the school and is also involved in wider programs including play group and breakfast club.
- The sustainability program encourages students to learn how to have a more sustainable approach to their lives. Each class manages a vegetable garden as part of the community food garden and participates in recycling projects.
- Science is not a specialist area; however, Primary Connections is implemented and there is evidence of integrated science, technology, engineering and mathematics activities across the curriculum. The school has gained additional funding to establish a dedicated science laboratory to enrich the range of opportunities available to students and staff.
- Support staff demonstrate strong commitment to the school programs, including the coordination and leadership of the weekly running club and seasonal netball program.
- Physical education is not a specialist area; however, the school meets the required time allocation and provides daily fitness, class sport sessions and Zumba classes. Successful annual grants provide Federal Community Sport Program funding to support a range of special coaching programs in a variety of sports.

- The reviewers confirm that the school can sustain education programs that are designed and delivered to meet the needs of all students.

### **Areas of strength**

- The sustained commitment of the school community to the provision of a safe, supportive and inclusive learning environment for all students.
- The improvements in student behaviour and wellbeing supported by a whole-school commitment and consistent application of programs.

## 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

- In addition to system requirements, allocated school financial resources are regularly reviewed, monitored and reported through administration meetings, financial committee meetings and monthly reports to the school board. Management systems are in place to successfully ensure strategic allocation remain viable and transparent.
- The school receives targeted funds for the chaplaincy program. Extra time for the school psychologist and an education assistant has been purchased in response to the demand for student learning assistance.
- Facilities are made available to the community through formal leasing arrangements including an agreement to provide before and after school care, and the inclusion of the Primary Extension and Challenge centre on-site.
- The leadership team acknowledges that workforce planning is an important element of business planning. The team accesses longitudinal staff employment data to aid in workforce planning. Reprofitting of staff positions occurred in 2015. A documented school plan to ensure effective and appropriate human resource planning and management is developing with the leadership team acknowledging the need to stabilise and consolidate staff positions, particularly in the classroom.
- The parent body is very active and effective in raising funds towards projects to improve the school grounds and environment and for additional teaching and learning resources. The school, together with the financial contribution from the Parents and Citizens' Association, is well positioned to sustain the current and intended program delivery.
- The principal has acknowledged the need for a documented organisation structure of the school that clearly details the levels of shared leadership in the school and describes membership, roles and responsibilities of the leadership team, curriculum committees, learning support team, the school management and the school board.

### Area of strength

- Sound financial management processes in place to successfully ensure strategic allocation remain viable and transparent.

## School Board

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

### Findings

- Membership of the board includes four staff and five parents. To comply with the *School Education Act 1999* and *School Education Regulations 2000* which specify the membership categories and composition, community representation needs to be considered. Full representation of the diverse school community remains a challenge.
- Strong and capable board leadership ensures the board understand its functions as prescribed in the *School Education Act 1999*, *School Education Regulations 2000* and Department of Education policy. The board is examining how to further refine these functions including how best to review its own performance.
- The board endeavours to communicate with the wider school community regarding its functions and activities. The school's progress towards the achievement of targets is reported in the annual report by the principal. The board is aware that proactive communication is vital and has indicated a commitment to explore strategies further.
- During this DPA, the board participated in:
  - endorsement of the DPA, school's annual report and budget
  - development and endorsement of the business plan
  - processes to review school performance
  - processes to determine satisfaction levels of parents, staff and students, with results reported in the school's annual report
  - endorsing the use of facilities
  - the review process.
- The board receives relevant monthly financial reports and advice on school performance and student improvement targets, as detailed in the school's business plan for discussion.
- The board is encouraged to further re-examine its governance role and explore opportunities that ensure full participation and involvement with the development as well as review of school processes as described in the DPA, particularly in the development of the next business plan.

**Areas of strength**

- The board is united in their commitment to supporting the school improve the quality of teaching, learning and the learning environment.

**Areas for improvement**

- Continue to explore proactive communication strategies to inform and include the diverse school community.
- Further develop and refine governance processes to maximise board effectiveness.

### Conclusion

A strong sense of community characterises Yuluma Primary School where a positive, safe, caring and supportive learning environment for students is a high priority and very evident in all aspects of the school.

During the 2015-17 DPA the leadership team and board have positioned the school to now more effectively and strategically refine its planning and processes, be explicit about its improvement agenda, and align policies and practices to ensure school-wide purposeful and successful learning for every student. This strategic approach with a focus on core learning priorities and key targets designed to gain maximum impact on student learning improvement and achievement will define the requirements of the next business plan.

Effective leadership is required to provide a clear direction for the school and establish a strong collegiate culture with a staff that remain optimistic to an agenda for school improvement. This is important in building an expert teaching team that understands their responsibility and accountability requirements and utilises the collective knowledge and understanding that exists within the school.

## Declaration

We confirm the information in this document is, to the best of our knowledge and based on the verification of the evidence provided by Yuluma Primary School, true and correct.

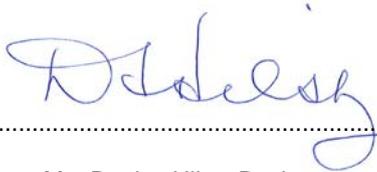
The principal and board chair have had an opportunity to comment on any matters of fact contained within this document.



16 April 2018

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Mrs Cris Sandri, Lead Reviewer

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Date



16 April 2018

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Mrs Denise Hilsz, Reviewer

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Date



17 April 2018

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Mr Ken Perris, Director  
Independent Public School Review

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Date