



Department of
Education

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Public education
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Western Australian College of Agriculture - Morawa

Public School Review

November 2019

PUBLIC SCHOOL REVIEW

Purpose

All Western Australian public schools are reviewed every three years 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 that a school is operating effectively and delivering high quality education to its students. The review acknowledges the achievements of the school and gives feedback to support the principal and staff with their improvement planning.

The principal provides the review team with a self-assessment of the school's performance based on evidence gathered by the principal and staff. Information validated by the review team is considered before and during the school visit. This forms the basis for the school review report. The report is provided to the principal, the chair of the school board/council and the Regional Executive Director.

Expectations of schools

For all Western Australian public schools, expectations are set out in either: the Delivery and Performance Agreement, which is an agreement between the Department (represented by the Director General), school (represented by the principal) and school board (represented by the school board chair); or, the Principals' Statement of Expectations and the Funding Agreement for Schools.

School performance rating

This performance rating is based on information gained from the self-assessment submission and the validation process. It is focused on a review of the following areas of school performance: relationships and partnerships; learning environment; leadership; use of resources; teaching quality; and student achievement and progress.

The school's performance rating is:

	Effective
	The school demonstrates effective practice in creating the conditions required for student success.

	Needs Improvement
	The school has aspects of its practice below expectations and needs supported action to improve student success.

Context

The Western Australian College of Agriculture – Morawa (the College), is located in the Midwest Education Region approximately 360 kilometres from Perth. The College was established in 1996, though its history dates back to 1978 with the enrolment of the first residential students. The attached residential facility provides accommodation for up to 67 students.

The College provides education and training to students who have an interest in agriculture, mining or trades with access to the industry standard machinery, equipment and workshop facilities.

Currently there are 62 students enrolled at the College from Year 10 to Year 12. It has an Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage rating of 992 (decile 5).

In 2013, the College gained Independent Public School status. The functions of the College Board are complemented by the farm operational expertise of the Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC).

The College has established a close association with the North Midlands Education and Industry Training Alliance (NMEITA). This has resulted in the development of the innovative pathway from the Certificate III Agriculture to Curtin University Associate Degree in Agribusiness through the Geraldton Universities Centre.

School self-assessment validation

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

The following aspects are confirmed:

- The Electronic School Assessment Tool (ESAT) submission provided an understanding of the college context, operational foundations and planning processes.
- The process of preparing for the Public School Review was aligned to, and assisted, ongoing procedures for self-assessment and improvement at the college.
- A range of evidence was selected for analysis.
- The ESAT submission provided overviews for each domain which assisted reviewers to gain a summary understanding of evidence presented.
- During the validation visit, college leaders and teachers, together with parents and support staff representatives provided feedback. They elaborated on the evidence and planning intentions described in the submission.
- Staff reported appreciation for their engagement with the self-assessment and review process and endorsed college operations.
- A culture of reflective practice and continuous improvement was evident in the ESAT and during the validation visit.
- There is alignment between the performance evidence selected, judgements about priorities and planning for improvement.
- Representatives of the College Board, AAC, Shire of Morawa and NMEITA engaged openly in the validation visit, providing insights to enhance the review process.

The following recommendation is made:

- Utilise the overviews for each domain in the ESAT as the framework to capture and organise targeted evidence.

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Relationships and partnerships	
<p>There is a strong culture of mutual trust and support among staff. Parents and key stakeholders are treated as partners in the promotion of student learning, wellbeing and career pathways. The College has a good reputation in, and the support of, the broader community.</p>	
Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic education and industry partnerships have been developed to positively engage students through the Morawa Education Independent Public School Cluster and NMEITA. • Staff understand the need for, and are committed to, school improvement. Based on identified need, the College has embarked on the implementation of the Boarding Standard for Australian schools and residences (the Australian Boarding Standard) to underpin its wellbeing priority. • Communication processes including Connect, fortnightly parent communication emails and termly newsletters, are well established and respected by staff and parents as being timely and informative. • College staff promote a warm, welcoming and inclusive atmosphere. Relationships between staff and students are respectful and positive. • An active and engaging College Board has educational, parental and industry diversity. High level understanding of their roles and responsibilities is enhanced by their contextual knowledge, expertise and regional credibility.
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a mechanism to solicit, collect and collate anecdotal evidence regarding college operations.

Learning environment	
<p>The College works to maintain a learning and living environment that is safe, orderly and inclusive. The foci of health and wellbeing, teaching and learning and training underpin the goal of a culture where all members of the College feel valued, connected and respected.</p>	
Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A comprehensive framework for health and wellbeing has been established for implementation. • The PBS¹ Framework has been used to guide the development of a consistent approach to behaviour management. This has been supported by professional learning in CMS² for all teaching and support staff. • Leaders articulate clear expectations of student behaviours. REACH, an online boarding management software tool, is used by residential staff to communicate with day staff about wellbeing issues that may impact on student learning. • Students at educational risk are identified, with appropriate interventions planned and routinely monitored.
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to embed the Australian Student Wellbeing Framework and the Australian Boarding Standard together with the Be You Framework.

Leadership

A shared and unifying vision has been established through the collegiate development of the business plan to provide clear college-wide direction. The strategic intent of the improvement agenda to align the vision with business plan priorities is enhanced through leader modelling.

Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing the Australian Student Wellbeing Framework has galvanised college leadership, staff, governance and students on a targeted improvement journey. • Performance management and development processes have been strategically aligned to the business plan and professional learning opportunities for personal and collective growth. Disciplined dialogue with all staff has enhanced the improved outcomes for students. • The instructional leadership of the principal is an integral element of staff capacity building. Staff at all levels, capably and enthusiastically undertake leadership roles in a shared leadership model. • The <i>Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework</i> informs culturally responsive college planning. Collaboration with Morawa District High School was instrumental in the positive community response to NAIDOC³ celebrations.
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce 360 degree feedback for senior staff to complement the use of the PPIT⁴ to enhance capacity building at all levels and ensure the succession of good leadership across the College.

Use of resources

Continuous examination and interrogation of college finances relating to the one line budget and farm enterprises, by the Department of Education and the CAAC⁵, ensure that finances are managed efficiently and effectively according to the needs of the students.

Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a clear and defensible link between college budgeting and its plans for raising the standards of achievement and attainment of all its students. • The manager corporate services plays a strategic role in resource management and deployment. As an integral member of the leadership team, she and the principal work closely to ensure strategic oversight. • A well-informed and balanced budget is set annually and includes short-term and long-term planning for workforce, and reserve funds for the college, farm and residential aspects, to ensure expenditure does not exceed budget. • Decisions related to funding of specific college, farm and residential programs and interventions such as the equine program and acquisition of a 'college dog', are evidence based.
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to build financial knowledge and capacity of staff to ensure succession planning is in place across the College. • Ensure clear and explicit links exist for business plan priorities, foci and targets for residential and farm budgets.

Teaching quality

The leader's expectations are articulated clearly and accepted uniformly by staff to drive classroom, farm and training practice. Staff base these practices on the shared belief that every student has the capacity to achieve in this unique environment.

Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College-wide beliefs about effective teaching are understood and accepted. Staff work consistently to ensure that lessons are authentically aligned to current best practice in each field. • Teaching and training staff have implemented an explicit model of teaching into all courses at the College. This has resulted in greater consistency of, and efficacy in, teaching practice in both academic and practical lessons. • Embedded curriculum and post-college pathways are accepted by students and parents. • Information and communications technology is embedded in practice. Targeted strategies including FarmersEdge™, Green Star Farms Initiative, Autosteer and drone use support exposure to, and build capacity with, farm technologies. • Teacher collaboration is focused on student progress within aligned practice. Data from the farm are utilised in lessons and assessments in APS⁶ and PPS⁷ courses and for authentic application of Mathematics Essentials.
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embed the pedagogical framework and explicit teaching/training model for all teachers and trainers while maintaining a focus on innovation and technology.

Student achievement and progress

Analysis of student achievement data in farm, training and academic streams informs planning and pedagogical focus. With a smaller proportion of students entering the College who have pre-qualified for the OLN⁸ than other Western Australian Colleges of Agriculture, staff capacity to interrogate progress data effectively is being further developed.

Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School performance is owned by all staff who share responsibility for developing student independence in making performance improvements. • Student progress at the College is positive as demonstrated in entry/exit testing data and the OLN⁸ achievement by Year 12. • Both the Vocational Education and Training achievement rate and the attainment rate for the College in 2018 were substantially higher than schools in the Midwest Education Region (20 per cent or more). • The WACE⁹ achievement rate for the College in 2018 was 73.3 per cent. This was considerably higher than the rates for the Midwest Education Region (55.2 per cent).
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further develop the case management approach to individual progress to optimise opportunities for student success.

Reviewers

Brett Hunt
Director, Public School Review

Stephen Watt
Principal, Western Australian
College of Agriculture - Narrogin
Peer Reviewer

Endorsement

Based on this report, I endorse your school performance rating of 'Effective'.

Your next school review is scheduled for 2022.



Stephen Baxter
Deputy Director General, Schools

References

- 1 Positive Behaviour Support
- 2 Classroom Management Strategies
- 3 National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee
- 4 Principal Performance Improvement Tool
- 5 Combined Agricultural Advisory Committee
- 6 Animal Production Systems
- 7 Plant Production Systems
- 8 Online Literacy and Numeracy Assessment
- 9 Western Australian Certificate of Education