



Department of
Education

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School of Special Educational Needs: Behaviour and Engagement

Public School Review

March 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 focussed 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 School of Special Educational Needs: Behaviour and Engagement (SSEN:B&E) coordinates educational support and services for students with extreme, complex and challenging behaviours.

As a new model of support for behaviour and engagement, SSEN:B&E commenced in the 2016 school year encompassing three key components:

- A new, small and specialised school (Midland Learning Academy) specifically designed to meet the learning needs of severely disengaged secondary students – this was introduced as a pilot to determine if this type of school should be considered in other locations in the State.
- Existing behaviour centres were replaced with 13 engagement centres. In addition, new engagement centres were established in the Kimberley, Wheatbelt, and Southwest Regions to provide an expanded range of services to a greater number of students with a wider regional focus.
- All existing supports related to student engagement and behaviour were combined under the Department's Statewide Services directorate.

School self-assessment validation

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

The following aspects are confirmed:

- SSEN:B&E self-assessment processes are thorough with strong engagement from the leadership team.
- A willingness to seek and respond to feedback is a key element of their review process.
- The SSEN:B&E self-assessment submission was framed around the service areas of professional learning, consultative support and intensive support.
- There is an alignment between performance evidence and judgements about areas for improvement.
- The validation process involved the review team meeting with the full SSEN:B&E leadership team in combination with visits to Engagement Centres in both the metropolitan area (including the Midland Learning Academy) and regional locations.

The following recommendation is made:

- Prioritise the use of the ESAT¹ to manage SSEN:B&E performance information, analysis and impact.

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Relationships and partnerships

Building reliable and trusting relationships and partnerships across a widely dispersed organisational structure has been challenging. Developing open and transparent communication channels with schools and the Engagement Centres has been a priority.

Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Formal agreements with other government departments and community organisations are enhancing student wellbeing through collaboration and coordinating services.• SSEN:B&E have established a culture of trust among staff despite the tyranny of distance and significant structural adjustment since 2016.• The Frequently Asked Questions strategy is an important component of the approach to communication with the Regions and schools.• The regional leadership, comprised of an Associate Principal and Lead Psychologist are valued by Engagement Centre teams and schools.
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review the influence of Regional Advisory Groups as contributors to providing advice for contextualised service delivery.• Actively build relationships and trust with schools/networks to improve enrolled schools' understanding and confidence in the SSEN:B&E model.

Learning environment

The aim of the leadership is for all SSEN:B&E staff and students to feel safe and capable of making others feel safe and supported. To achieve this, all work is approached with an attitude of putting people first with an unrelenting focus on 'High Care' for all staff.

Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• An ongoing emphasis on organisational safety will promote a culture of wellbeing of staff and students at SSEN:B&E.• Case study research into successful student engagement strategies provides an opportunity for greater understanding of what can be done to improve outcomes for all students.• The priority of creating safe, supportive, flexible and personalised student learning environments is acknowledged by the leadership team.• A guarantee of service has been established for all excluded students.• Therapeutic Crisis Intervention in Schools (TCIS) is widely used in behaviour support planning, forms part of student relationship re-setting and is a point of reference for enabling a common language and practice.
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Embed TCIS pedagogy within SSEN:B&E in combination with CMS² and PBS³ professional learning.• Embed infrastructure which is culturally responsive, strategically positioned and purpose designed for student engagement.

Leadership

The senior leadership team identified that work was needed to establish ways of creating a more cohesive, effective and trusting team environment. Challenges of establishing a team ethos include changes to its composition, geographic factors and defining roles and responsibilities.

Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The leadership team charter is respected and adhered to as part of its growth mindset. • A significant feature of the charter is their focus on working together to strengthen the SSEN:B&E role in supporting the most 'at risk' students. • Capacity building of the middle management team through growth coaching is a key leadership development strategy. • Program coordinators play a leadership role in building positive and productive relationships with schools in each region. • The SSEN:B&E leadership have refined and embedded a widely accepted set of values, vision, model of support and management processes.
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a communication strategy with a focus on promoting the work of SSEN:B&E across regions. • Continue to build the confidence of schools in the Request for Assistance Pathway. • Re-establish an aspirant pathway program.

Use of resources

Substantial resource allocations have been required to establish a redesigned, integrated model of support and service for students from Kindergarten to Year 12.

Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The redeployment and monitoring of staff resources and physical assets was well managed in parallel with the introduction of a new model of service. • A recent review of recruitment processes will offer opportunities to strengthen the SSEN:B&E's capacity to attract and retain staff. • The astute management of resources required by virtue of the unique structure and service delivery of SSEN:B&E has been acknowledged. • Budget allocations, as part of the overall financial management processes, provide a clear 'line of sight' between strategic intentions and operational imperatives.
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with other schools of SEN⁴ to consider new funding model options.

Teaching quality

Supporting the development of quality teaching practices through increasing teachers' knowledge and skills is a key driver of SSEN:B&E work with schools. There is a planned approach to building SSEN:B&E staff capacity starting with Program Coordinators, teachers and support staff.

Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building staff capacity is a priority for the SSEN:BE leadership team with particular emphasis on working with students – Kindergarten to Year 12. • Personal and social capabilities are a focus in personalised learning plans for Section 24⁵ students. • Building staff capacity through sharing strengths in practice throughout all programs ensures consistent practice across Engagement Centres and the Midland Learning Academy. • Strong induction processes informed by the SSEN:B&E values, vision and model maintain standards and consistency of service delivery.
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish consistent delivery of performance management practices across all Engagement Centres. • Establish a working party to monitor consistency in the management of Section 24 students across all sites.

Student achievement and progress

The service provision model provides a framework of three key phases of operation, which are: Needs Assessment, Service Negotiation and Service Provision. The model outlines the processes and outcomes expected in each phase. The challenge remains to collect reliable evidence of its positive impact for schools.

Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The leadership team are acutely aware of the attention required to ensure that data is used to measure the impact of service on student progress. • Mechanisms are in place to ensure Section 24 and excluded students receive intensive and timely support. • Service agreements are evaluated at the conclusion of an agreement cycle. • Clear systems and processes are in place to respond to students with the highest, most intense needs.
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure Engagement Centres provide timely and reliable feedback on the outcomes of their Service Agreements. • Determine indicators of success that are measurable and consistent across school and Engagement Centre record keeping.

Reviewers

Rod Lowther
Director, Public School Review

Caleb Jones,
Principal
School of Special Educational
Needs: Medical & Mental Health
Peer Reviewer

Vicki McKeown
Principal
Coodanup College
Peer Reviewer

Endorsement

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

Your next school review is scheduled for 2022.



Lindsay Hale
Executive Director, Public Schools

References

- 1 Electronic School Assessment Tool
- 2 Classroom Management Strategies
- 3 Positive Behaviour Support
- 4 Special Educational Need
- 5 Arrangement for attendance at a place outside school

