



Department of  
Education

**Shaping the future**

# Karratha 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](mailto:PublicSchoolAccountability.PublicSchoolReview@education.wa.edu.au)

## Context

Karratha Senior High School opened in 1972 and is located 1,500 kilometres north-east of Perth in the Pilbara Education Region. It is co-located with the North Regional TAFE<sup>1</sup> and Leisureplex, the hub of recreation activities within the City of Karratha.

The school has an Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage of 916 (decile 9).

There are currently 1,157 students enrolled from Year 7 to Year 12.

Becoming an Independent Public School in 2015, Karratha Senior High School is supported by the School Board and the Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C).

The first Public School Review of Karratha Senior High School was conducted in Term 1, 2021. 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 reflecting on the methodology of the previous process, choosing a more inclusive, school-wide approach.
- The Electronic School Assessment Tool (ESAT) submission included a broad selection of evidence within each domain.
- The engagement of staff was notable for the level of enthusiasm, interest and knowledge demonstrated by those contributing to validation meeting discussions.
- Input from a broad cross-section of staff including school leaders, teachers and allied professionals, provided an optimistic assessment of the school's future. This was complemented by positive and insightful comments from Big Picture Learning Australia, Shooting Stars and Clontarf Foundation program representatives.
- School Board and P&C members, together with student representatives elaborated on the emerging school culture providing a positive acknowledgement of 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.
- When selecting evidence make it clear why the information has been included in the ESAT submission.

## Relationships and partnerships

Success for schools is fostered by placing an emphasis on building and maintaining high levels of interpersonal relations between staff. The recently appointed Principal has made building strong organisational relationships a priority.

### Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- A genuine and meaningful school community partnership ethos is at the core of the school's moral purpose. This sense of connection is providing students with a supportive environment to develop their potential.
- Feedback from both staff and wider community stakeholders, indicates the school's future focused communication strategy is gaining traction. There is a sense of staff alignment and positivity throughout the school, creating trusting and productive relations.
- The School Board understands its governance responsibilities and practices and is fully supportive of the school's direction. It enthusiastically advocates for the school, noting in particular, efforts by the school's leadership to engage authentically with the wider community.
- Early in 2024, the school engaged Creative Communities to undertake targeted research to identify what was working well, predominant issues and potential opportunities for the school to address and pursue. Emerging foci areas included good news sharing, fact sharing, myth 'busting' and stakeholder recognition.
- The school continues to prioritise Aboriginal cultural acknowledgement and awareness with planning currently underway, co-designed with students and Aboriginal and Islander education officer staff, to develop a respectful and culturally safe classroom and school-wide environment.

### Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Use school culture survey data to address specific actions identified to strengthen local industry and community relations.

## Learning environment

The Principal understands, and is driven by, research supporting the view that student attendance is the most compelling factor for student success at school. To that end, he has committed to undertaking the lead in planning and implementing the school's student attendance improvement strategy for the 2025 school year.

### Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Data is analysed from a combination of targeted programs, supported by teachers, education assistants (EAs) and program coordinators, and used to inform support programs for vulnerable students.
- A team-based approach to student behaviour management programs, reducing variability in classrooms and fit-for-purpose student behaviour management programs are a feature of the school's considerable investment in Positive Behaviour Support (PBS). There are high levels of staff consistency in responding to student behaviours as evidenced by PBS School-wide Evaluation Tool feedback.
- Led by a passionate and knowledgeable PBS Committee, reinforcement of the expected behaviours of Respect, Responsibility and Inclusion have had a positive impact on levels of classroom order, student/staff respectful relations and embracing diversity.
- A range of alternative learning pathways are offered for students with additional needs. They are identified and triaged through efficient processes and trauma informed strategies.
- Students feel cared for and safe, believing they have a voice and can share their concerns with staff.

### Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- The Principal to lead a strategy for improved student attendance. Plan to include targets for each year level presented to the first School Board meeting in 2025.

## Leadership

The leadership team has embraced the school's complexity and canvassed widely to build a strong school-wide leadership culture. By welcoming innovation, personal initiative and encouraging feedback, the Principal is keen to demonstrate that by working at Karratha Senior High School, leadership opportunities exist for all staff.

### Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The executive leadership has incentivised the staff appetite for undertaking leadership roles. The purpose, vision and strategy of leaders are contextually responsive and agile. The dynamic operating environment is well understood, yet school leaders at all levels see the school as being charged with opportunity.
- The Fogarty EDvance School Improvement Program has brought structure and process to the school's direction and purpose. Leadership is distributed across the school and connected with agreed intent. Knowing the Principal has a future focused outlook, staff know they have time to organise, plan and implement change.
- The development of the school's 'Good Teaching' framework document has established staff shared expectations and accountability both to their teaching craft, and their professional obligation to each other. The spirit of staff teamwork is exemplified through the quality of collaboration between teachers and EAs.
- Genuine consultation with the School Board and P&C enables both groups to feel valued and respected for their contribution to discussions involving, the business plan, budget and student outcomes.

### Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Actively pursue plans to expand relationships with local business and services and continue strengthening relationship links with the Pilbara Universities Centre and North Regional TAFE.

## Use of resources

Judicious deployment of school resources requires a clear-eyed understanding of school planning priorities. Flexible structures and processes are necessary to ensure complex school environments maximise available school funding allocations for the benefit of all students.

### Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Through the work of the Principal and the manager corporate services (MCS), staff have a growing appreciation for the complexities of managing finances, salary, budget and workforce priorities.
- Through the work of the MCS, high levels of transparency, integrity and probity guide the evidence-based decision making which is at the core of the school's resource allocations.
- The Finance Committee has played a proactive role in supporting the school leadership to make timely decisions designed to meet the needs of all students. Using high quality guidelines prepared for staff, the Finance Committee and cost-centre managers assist them to understand the imperatives for achieving high levels of fiscal responsibility and applying sound governance of workforce management principles.
- Significant levels of staff transiency require astute forecasting when shaping the school's workforce plan. The frequent adjustments necessary has created a sharp awareness of the need to be vigilant, proactively seeking opportunities to recruit and retain staff.
- The school understands the importance of having technology assets capable of delivering ICT<sup>2</sup> support to staff and creating opportunities for students to stretch their imagination. Major advances in the quality and robustness of ICT infrastructure have flowed from the exceptional work of the school's network coordinator.

### Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Regularly alert staff to the challenges and opportunities of successfully managing school finances, budget and workforce. Invite participation in leadership roles involving financial and workforce management.

## Teaching quality

The focus on continuous improvement in the craft of teaching, to achieve low variance in the learning experiences for all students, is a school priority. The centrepiece of this aspiration is the school's agreed 'Good Teaching' framework together with the school's Teaching and Learning Plan.

### Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- There is an established core of highly accomplished lead teachers (HALT), instructional coaches and level 3 teachers driving staff professional learning, focusing on the Department's Quality Teaching Strategy and Teaching for Impact.
- The school improvement agenda has been well-served by a thorough and deep analysis of student achievement data. This is complemented by a school-wide self-assessment methodology based on seeking to select and or create reliable assessment tools complemented by efficient data collection processes.
- There is a strong, positive and proactive approach to reviewing the use of data to inform teaching practice. This means staff genuinely reflect on the impact of their teaching practices as part of their professional obligation to their students, often seeking advice from colleagues to improve their craft.
- Staff are supported to tailor teaching methods, resources and assessments to meet diverse student needs. Flexible grouping, differentiated tasks, and giving personalised feedback to students informs learning.
- Reporting to Parents is a school priority. Task mark reports are emailed to parents. Parent nights are held for face-to face communication to review student progress.

### Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Formalise instructional coaching processes to strengthen differentiation approaches. Establish network relations with schools beyond the Pilbara region to widen exposure to similar work done in other schools.

## Student achievement and progress

This school is focused on ensuring there is continuity, consistency and cohesion as key features of its selection of fit-for-purpose assessments. Staff are being empowered to own the data, set explicit improvement targets, make informed decisions on grade allocations and confidently discuss student progress with parents.

### Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The leadership promotes the view that granular data analysis is the driver of teacher decision making. To that end, the school conducts workshops on interpreting and using, NAPLAN<sup>3</sup>, OLNA<sup>4</sup> and WACE<sup>5</sup> tracker data to deliver effective student monitoring and pathway planning.
- The MultiLit program identifies students who require reading intervention. Using Progressive Achievement Tests, Elastik data gaps have been found, curriculum adjustments made, and course changes considered.
- Head of learning areas are implementing a strategic and coordinated approach to moderation. Collaborative moderation in the science learning area allows teachers to develop consistency in judgements across the learning area, prepare robust assessment rubrics, and have confidence in using the SCSA<sup>6</sup> Judging Standards.
- Year 7 and Year 9 NAPLAN relative assessments have remained within reasonable limits when compared to like schools. There is a notable lift in achievement from Year 7 to Year 9 although improvements in student OLNA pre-qualification data remains a challenge.
- The percentage of students achieving WACE is similar, 75 percent against 77 percent of like schools, and reducing the gap compared to Western Australian public schools 90 percent. Efforts to encourage ATAR<sup>7</sup> students to choose an ATAR pathway over readily available local apprenticeships and work placements, are commendable.

### Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Continue to conduct staff workshops to achieve superior levels of data analysis proficiency.

## Reviewers

Rod Lowther  
**Director, Public School Review**

Kacey Single  
**Principal, Kent Street Senior High School**  
**Peer Reviewer**

## Endorsement

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

You will receive formal notification in the 2 terms leading up to your school's next scheduled review. This notification will be provided in 2027.



Steven Watson  
**Deputy Director General, Schools**

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## References

- 1 Technical and Further Education
- 2 Information and communications technology
- 3 National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy
- 4 Online Literacy and Numeracy Assessment
- 5 Western Australian Certificate of Education
- 6 School Curriculum and Standards Authority
- 7 Australian Tertiary Admission Rank