



# School of Special Educational Needs: Sensory

## Public School Review

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## Purpose

All Western Australian public schools are reviewed by the Department of Education's School and Principal Review directorate. A review gives assurance to the local community, the Minister for Education 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 [PublicSchoolReview@education.wa.edu.au](mailto:PublicSchoolReview@education.wa.edu.au)

## Context

The School of Special Educational Needs: Sensory (SSEN: S) provides lead educational support for children and students with hearing loss, vision impairment or dual sensory loss from birth to the completion of school. The school is based at the Statewide Services Centre in Padbury and supports students in both public and non-government schools throughout Western Australia.

The school operates the Deaf Education and Vision Education Programs to support eligible children, their schools and families. It employs teachers with specialist skills and other specialist staff such as audiologists, school psychologists, braille transcribers, a captioning officer and educational interpreters.

The Early Childhood Service supports families with children who have sensory loss from birth to 4 years. Family-centred programs, including parent education, are run onsite at the Statewide Services Centre in Padbury and Southwell Primary School. Individual programs occur in the home or care centre.

The Visiting Teacher Service assists classroom teachers and school communities with developing teaching and learning adjustments for students with hearing loss, vision impairment or dual sensory loss. In addition, the visiting teachers work with each child on a tailored teaching and learning program to support development of specific skills related to the relevant Expanded Core Curricula.

The first Public School Review of School of Special Educational Needs: Sensory was conducted in Term 2, 2021. This 2025 Public School Review report provides a current point of reference for the school's 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:

- A highly collaborative approach supported the development of an authentic and transparent school self-assessment that captured the voice of all staff.
- School leaders guided staff through a thorough examination of The Standard, using specific lines of inquiry to foster a deep understanding of the domains, conduct initial evaluations of the school's performance and identify key themes.
- A robust evidence-based decision making process underpinned the self-assessment. Teams gathered salient evidence to support their judgments, which was analysed to inform future directions. The leadership team collated the views of all staff into well-structured synopsis documents that clearly linked to the submitted evidence for each domain.
- Staff members reported that the process was highly valuable and deepened their understanding of their school's complexity, processes, resourcing, and direction.
- The opportunity for the review team to observe the work of the school in varied contexts, including a primary school, a Language Development Centre, the Lighthouse Families program, regional areas through video recordings, and the Transcription and Resource Unit during an additional half-day visit, enriched the team's understanding of the multi-layered service delivered by the school.
- During the validation day, parents and external stakeholders expressed their strong appreciation and support for the school's work, highlighting the essential services provided to individual students and their families, as well as to teachers in mainstream schools and within the broader network of specialised agencies and providers.

The following recommendation is made:

- Enhance ongoing cycles of school self-assessment by collecting and analysing longitudinal student achievement and progress data to measure the impact of the school's interventions.

## Relationships and partnerships

Driven by a commitment to enable every learner to reach their potential for independence, the school prioritises genuine relationships with students, their families, the students' dual-enrolled schools, and external agencies, to ensure highly responsive, expert, and collaborative service delivery.

### Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Positive collegial relationships are fostered through professional learning communities and mentoring processes. After-school opportunities for staff to learn and practice their skills in both Auslan and Braille provide forums for sharing expertise, building capacity and connecting with colleagues. School development days, attended by staff from across the state, serve as a critical vehicle for collaboration.
- Intentionally developed strategic partnerships with agencies, including Hearing Australia, WACHS<sup>1</sup>, Indigenous Outreach Services, the Lions Eye Institute, and several universities, provide comprehensive services to students and families while ensuring the exchange of current best practices in sensory education.
- Effective and consistent communication between staff, families, and the schools of dual-enrolled students is evidenced through a range of mechanisms, including the collaborative development and monitoring of sensory education plans. In addition, the Deaf Education Early Childhood Service and Peer Engagement Day educators utilise the Seesaw application to share information, photographs, Auslan signs, and videos, engaging and informing families.
- The School Council provides integral governance and advocacy, facilitating strong parent and community engagement, and representing varied educational needs and diverse community expectations.

### Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Embed consistent communication and promotional strategies to ensure stakeholders understand the nature and scope of the school's service delivery.
- Broaden community representation on the School Council by considering the appointment of a representative from an external agency with relevant contextual expertise.

## Learning environment

School staff are united in their commitment to mitigate barriers to student learning and participation. Multi-disciplinary staff and teachers collaborate to ensure equitable access for students with sensory impairment.

### Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Highly inclusive practices, delivered through multi-tiered systems of support, are embedded across all programs, with universal, targeted, and intensive supports tailored to student needs. Targeted intervention, including direct teaching and environmental adjustments, supports students' equitable access to learning opportunities.
- The delivery of professional learning and provision of online resources builds the capacity of teachers to meet the needs of students with sensory loss across the state.
- Staff wellbeing is actively supported through structured collaboration, professional learning, and social connection strategies. The creation of hubs and the embedded use of technology have reduced isolation, enhancing the wellbeing of visiting teachers.
- A holistic, family-centred approach to intervention, including Peer and Youth Engagement Days, home visits, and Early Years programs, supports highly responsive and flexible service provision.

### Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Strengthen culturally responsive practice by expanding access to Deaf culture and Auslan, and engaging further with the Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework and Cultural responsiveness hub.
- Expand wellbeing and engagement opportunities, such as Peer Engagement Days, Youth Engagement Days and Country Girls Group, to include students enrolled in the Vision Education Program.

## Leadership

The Principal has created a shared vision for continuous school improvement within a collaborative, trusting, and positive school culture. They have empowered and supported staff to lead programs and priority areas.

### Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The school's vision, 'Valuing Difference; Equity in Learning; Empowering All,' establishes a clear moral purpose that guides the efforts of all staff members. The collaboratively developed Strategic Plan 2024-2026 informs operational plans, directing daily practices.
- Aspirant leaders are identified and developed using the Western Australian Future Leaders Framework, as well as mentoring and professional learning.
- A comprehensive model of distributed leadership facilitates genuine collective responsibility through various leadership opportunities including associate principals, coordinators of teacher services, equitable access program coordinator, and the assessment review team. Additionally, a detailed organisational chart ensures all staff members understand the responsibilities and portfolios of their leaders, providing transparency and enhancing efficiency.
- Ongoing staff development is supported by embedded performance management processes, where staff self-reflect against the Teacher of the Deaf Elaborations of the AITSL<sup>2</sup> or Professional Standards Elaborations for Specialist Teachers (Vision Impairment). Teachers are encouraged to apply for level 3 teacher status and are provided with coaching throughout the process.

### Recommendation

The review team support the following:

- Introduce an induction and mentoring program for coordinators teacher services and program coordinators to ensure continuity of leadership efficacy.

## Use of resources

Transparent financial and resource management processes ensure that allocations align with student needs and support the school's strategic direction and priorities.

### Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The Principal, manager corporate services, associate principals and Finance Committee collaborate to monitor expenditure across the numerous service delivery areas of the school. Detailed Excel spreadsheets support the tracking of program and cost centre budgets.
- Driven by a commitment to delivering high quality education for its students, the school makes significant investments in staffing to ensure specialised expertise through recruitment, induction, professional learning and coaching.
- As leaders in the field of sensory education, the school prioritises the purchase, lease, or trial of new assistive technologies to stay at the forefront of technological developments, and provide the best available tools and resources to students.
- Considerable investment in information technology, including current workstations and mobile devices, as well as cellular data for off-site connectivity, ensures the effective delivery of programs and ease of access for staff.

### Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Embed prudent workforce planning to support succession planning and address future gaps.
- Develop a detailed plan for the expenditure of funding in reserve accounts.
- Refine the asset replacement schedule by consolidating the information technology and resource needs of both programs into a single schedule.

## Teaching quality

Specialist programs, family centred practice, and coordinated support across program areas highlight strong alignment between shared beliefs, strategic planning, and daily practice, ensuring consistency of purpose and delivery throughout the school.

### Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- A comprehensive induction program supports high-performing mainstream teachers in upskilling and developing the required expertise in sensory education through professional learning, work shadowing, and targeted mentoring. The school has prioritised continued consultation and collaboration with tertiary institutions to expand locally available training, addressing workforce shortages of teachers with the required specialisations.
- Highly skilled specialist teachers implement differentiated and inclusive teaching strategies that are responsive to students' sensory, communication, cognitive, and social-emotional needs. Differentiation is documented and guided through individualised Sensory Education Plans, Family Service Plans, and collaboration with schools and families.
- Staff engage in evidence-based professional learning aligned to best practice in Deaf and Vision Education. Teachers utilise research, specialist assessment tools, the National Quality Standards, Expanded Core Curriculum, and St. Gabriel's Curriculum for Early Childhood students, to inform ongoing planning, assessment and goal setting.
- Parents are recognised as vital partners in their child's education. Regular updates are provided to parents regarding their child's progress, both in person and through written documentation.

### Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Finalise and implement the Western Australian Curriculum aligned version of the Expanded Core Curriculum for Deaf and Hard of Hearing students.
- Develop and trial the Western Australian Curriculum aligned version of the Expanded Core Curriculum for Vision Impaired and Early Childhood students.
- Explore the use of Reporting to Parents to incorporate the Expanded Core Curriculum, enabling the development of Sensory Education Plans on the platform.

## Student achievement and progress

Student achievement and progress is measured across developmental domains aligned with the Expanded Core Curriculum, with a strong focus on communication, independence, self-advocacy, social-emotional learning, and engagement.

### Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Illustrating the school's unique context and specialised program delivery, a rich cross-section of assessment data, including health, mobility, social-emotional learning, and academic achievement, is collected and analysed to inform individual student planning and monitor achievement and progress.
- Teachers collect diagnostic, formative, and summative data using validated assessment tools tailored to the needs of students who are deaf or hard of hearing, vision impaired, or experience dual sensory loss, along with structured observations. This data informs individualised planning, tracks progress and supports the refinement of teaching strategies.
- Moderation is embedded across the school to support consistent planning, assessment, and reporting practices. Sensory Education Plans are collaboratively refined through targeted workshops and peer review, then quality-assured, ensuring a shared standard of practice across each specialist program.

### Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Progress the work of the assessment and review team to develop and implement a consistent data collection schedule and tracking tool for monitoring student longitudinal progress and achievement.
- Continue to trial the use of individual student profiles and case studies to record student progress and achievement.

| Reviewers                                                |                                                                                    |
|----------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Melanie Langley<br><b>Director, Public School Review</b> | Steven Smethurst<br><b>Principal, Belmont City College</b><br><b>Peer Reviewer</b> |

## 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 2028.



Steven Watson  
**Deputy Director General, Schools**

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## References

- 1 Western Australia Country Health Service
- 2 Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership