



Department of  
Education

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Public education  
**A world of opportunities**

# Byford Secondary College

## Public School Review

March 2020

# PUBLIC SCHOOL REVIEW

## Purpose

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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

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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

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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:

	<b>Effective</b>
	The school demonstrates effective practice in creating the conditions required for student success.

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

## Context

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Byford Secondary College is located approximately 43 kilometres south-east of Perth within the South Metropolitan Education Region.

The college opened in 2014 as an Independent Public School. It boasts expansive grounds and offers state of the art facilities including design and technology workshops, a performing arts/music/media block and science laboratories. A hydro-therapy pool and supporting infrastructure cater for students with special educational need.

The college has an Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage rating of 981 (decile 6). There are currently 1524 students enrolled at the school from Year 7 to Year 12 with the expectation that numbers will continue to rise over the coming years.

Community support for the college is demonstrated through the work of the College Board.

## School self-assessment validation

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The principal submitted a comprehensive school self-assessment.

The following aspects are confirmed:

- A variety of evidence sets were submitted to the Electronic School Assessment Tool to support the college's narrative regarding progress against the domains of the School Improvement and Accountability Framework (SIAF) and student achievement and progress.
- A broad representation of staff contributed to the submission and an equally large number of teaching and support staff engaged actively during the validation visit.
- The perspective of the College Board and that of student leaders provided insights that contributed considerably to the Public School Review.
- The college leadership team acknowledged the value of the process of self-assessment against the SIAF. In particular, the relatively new principal appreciated the opportunity to gain a global perspective of the college's strengths and areas requiring further development.

The following recommendations are made:

- Given the interdependent nature of the domains of the SIAF, assume cross-pollination of evidence sets and restrict the number of times any one document is uploaded.
- Be overt in the analysis of the evidence sets provided by ensuring that the college's self-assessment articulates the impact of the data clearly to the reviewers.

## Public School Review

Relationships and partnerships	
Open lines of communication and timely feedback provided by teachers and the college leadership provide parents with opportunities to enjoy a positive relationship with the college.	
Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A significant improvement in the level of engagement by and with the College Board is empowering them to contribute productively.</li> <li>• The high level of professional collegiality amongst staff is indicative of a strong morale where quality relationships are quickly forged.</li> <li>• Strategic partnerships, including with Aspire University of Western Australia and the Graham (Polly) Farmer Foundation Follow the Dream, reinforce the college motto to 'aspire to excellence'.</li> <li>• Active engagement with local organisations, such as the Chamber of Commerce and Industry WA and the local business association, assist in establishing mutually beneficial relationships between the college and its community.</li> </ul>
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to build the capacity of the College Board to support the strategic direction of the college.</li> <li>• Work to re-establish a functioning Parents and Citizens' Association as part of the larger campaign to foster greater involvement of families in the college.</li> <li>• Continue to forge quality partnerships, especially focused on furthering the aspirational goals of students seeking university pathways.</li> </ul>

Learning environment	
There is a genuine and shared commitment to the wellbeing of students by all staff. Transparent processes, led by the student services team, result in a positive culture for learning.	
Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whole-school 'not negotiables' are widely accepted, setting a clear standard of expected behaviours.</li> <li>• A range of pastoral care interventions cater for individual needs by improving levels of engagement and build upon the social capabilities of students at educational risk.</li> <li>• A combination of the Aspire program, offering extension opportunities in lower school, coupled with literacy and numeracy intervention for students requiring additional support, caters for diverse academic needs.</li> </ul>
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a school-wide strategy focused on overt and explicit teaching of behaviours to further embed a strong culture of social cohesion.</li> <li>• Align practices that cater for students at educational risk to foster a more coordinated approach to intervention.</li> </ul>

## Leadership

Strong, visible leadership, with a conscious intent to ensure transparency of decision making, is consolidating the shared ownership of the college vision.

Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accountability frameworks with time allocated for reflection is increasing active engagement with college priorities, especially at the level of improved student achievement.</li> <li>• Staff induction processes and a shared commitment to performance development has created a culture of improvement underpinned by a genuine desire to strive for excellence.</li> <li>• A distributed leadership structure, with clear processes in place to encourage aspirant leaders, results in a shared perception that deployment of staff to key roles is best meeting the current needs of the college.</li> <li>• A celebration of culture, both through whole-school events and embedded in curriculum, serves as evidence of the implementation of the <i>Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework</i>.</li> </ul>
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In devising the next business plan, seek fewer targets focused on the core business of teaching and learning.</li> <li>• When planning curriculum pathways, interrogate the impact of timetabling structures so that students are well-prepared for senior schooling courses.</li> <li>• Seek authentic engagement of the local Aboriginal community in an endeavour to be more culturally responsive.</li> </ul>

## Use of resources

Evidence-based decisions ensure that there is a clear and defensible link between the considered deployment of resources and the planned intent of the college to raise student levels of attainment.

Effectiveness	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The highly capable Finance Committee apply established processes in determining appropriate use of funds.</li> <li>• Learning area help cards provide cost-centre managers with a clarity of purpose, resulting in comprehensive budget submissions.</li> <li>• Federal grant applications and sponsorship agreements support the financial health of the college.</li> <li>• Strategic hiring of college facilities seeks to establish the status of the college as a central hub in the local community.</li> </ul>
Improvements	<p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finalise the comprehensive workforce plan being devised to meet future needs, including the intent to gain a 'college of choice' reputation amongst prospective employees.</li> <li>• Explicitly articulate the alignment between the budget, planning and the direct impact on student outcomes.</li> </ul>

## Teaching quality

A highly committed and collegiate staff demonstrate a united approach to improving student motivation and capacity to achieve through regular homework and study clubs.

<b>Effectiveness</b>	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Monroe Board, commencing with clear ‘do now’ activities, engages students in their learning.</li> <li>• A focus on reading, the use of word walls and numeracy learning area specific strategies support the implementation of shared and common practices across the school.</li> <li>• Active engagement in professional learning, often in-house through the ‘Conversation Café’, encourages the sharing of recognised best-practice.</li> <li>• Universal Design for Learning training aims to increase teachers’ capacity to differentiate curriculum effectively.</li> </ul>
<b>Improvements</b>	<p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capitalise upon the use of the Monroe Board by incorporating it into a comprehensive lesson design structure reflected in school-wide pedagogy.</li> <li>• Establish a culture of disciplined dialogue through increased data literacy.</li> <li>• Seek shared and common processes to monitor the impact of differentiation strategies so that timely adjustments can be made.</li> </ul>

## Student achievement and progress

With a mantra that ‘60 is the new 50’, the college is raising the staff expectations of student achievement and encouraging all students to increase their aspirational goals.

<b>Effectiveness</b>	<p>The review team validate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) achievement data are sound across all testing areas with noted high progress and high achievement in reading when compared to like schools.</li> <li>• While the college median Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) is lower than desired, robust analyses of ATAR course data using maximising feedback, ensures that strategies are applied to impact positively on future course delivery.</li> <li>• Vocational Education and Training certificate achievement rates are high with a new Certificate IV in Health being introduced as a pathway designed to meet both student and industry needs.</li> <li>• Data triangulation, using NAPLAN, Progressive Achievement Tests and school-based grades provides an opportunity to gain better comparability of grading, which is a current focus area.</li> </ul>
<b>Improvements</b>	<p>The review team support the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain a focus on applying modified practices in response to data analyses to better cater for identified needs.</li> <li>• Increase the rigour and focus on student achievement in Year 10 and Year 11 to better support individualised course counselling and pathway setting.</li> </ul>

## Reviewers

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Kath Ward  
**Director, Public School Review**

Eleanor Hughes  
**Principal, Joseph Banks Secondary College  
Peer Reviewer**

## Endorsement

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

Your next school review is scheduled for 2023.



Stephen Baxter  
**Deputy Director General, Schools**