



Government of Western Australia
Department of Education

Phoenix Primary School

2017

Review Findings



Independent Public School Review

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School and Review Details

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Principal: | Ms Margaret Pretty |
| Board Chair: | Mr Ian Darglish |
| School Address: | 28 Phoenix Road, Hamilton Hill WA 6163 |
| Number of Students: | 232 |
| ICSEA¹ | 1005 (5) |
| Reviewers: | Ms Margaret Banks (Lead) Mr Steve Gibson |
| Review Dates: | 8 and 9 November 2017 |

Purpose of the Review

The purpose of this review is to provide assurance to the principal and school community, the board and the Director General of the Department of Education of the extent to which the school staff and board have met the commitments of the Delivery and Performance Agreement (DPA). The review verifies the degree to which there are effective processes in place bringing about improved student learning.

¹ The Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) is a scale of socio-educational advantage that is computed for each school. It allows for comparisons to be made between schools that are matched according to their socio-educational advantage, allowing fair comparisons of NAPLAN results between schools with students who have a similar ICSEA. The median ICSEA value is 1000.
http://www.acara.edu.au/resources/Fact_Sheet_-_About_ICSEA.pdf

Review Methodology

Underpinning the review methodology is the understanding that the principal is required to ensure the roles and responsibilities of the DPA are met; school performance and student improvement targets and priorities, as detailed in the school's business plan, are assessed, reviewed annually and an annual report made publicly available. The review seeks to determine the extent to which these commitments have been met.

The principal provided the school self-review conclusions to the reviewers one month prior to the commencement of the review.

The reviewers supplemented the information provided by the principal with information on the school's achievements, its processes and its student performance data from a number of sources which included:

- the *My School*[®] website
- School Performance Monitoring
- Schools Online reports.

Reviewers analysed the evidence presented in the school self-review documentation to verify achievement of the DPA and business plan commitments, and developed lines of inquiry where further in-school verification was required.

An agenda for the site visit was negotiated with the principal to enable the gathering of evidence to verify claims made in the school self-review statements. During the review visit the reviewers sourced evidence to support the claims through observation and discussion with leaders, teaching and support staff, board members, parents and students where required. Where the school belongs to an Independent Public School (IPS) cluster of schools the review considers whether the purpose of the cluster has been met and the benefits to the school.

The evidence provided by the principal, along with information gathered by the reviewers prior to and during the review visit, was used as the basis for judgements made in verifying how well the school staff and board have met the commitments of the DPA and business plan.

Business Plan

How effective was the business plan in responding to the school's context and improving student learning (progress, achievement and engagement)?

Phoenix Primary School is in the suburb of Hamilton Hill and commenced operations in 1976. The school became an IPS in 2015 and currently has 232 students enrolled in 10 classes. Student numbers have been increasing since 2015 with a double stream operating in Kindergarten in 2017. This increase is mainly due to an influx of young families buying real estate in the local area. This has also led to an increase in the school's ICSEA from 966 in 2012 to 1005 in 2017. There has been a significant shift in student distribution with 26% of students now falling in the bottom quartile of the My School distribution of students data compared to 48% in 2010.

The school features a wide range of cultural backgrounds, with approximately 28 nationalities represented within the school population. Currently 42% of the children attending the school have been identified as English as an additional language or dialect (EAL/D) students. In 2016, the student transiency rate was 23.6% which was an increase on the previous year but still considerably less than those recorded for 2013 and 2014.

Findings

- The business plan consists of a set of statements regarding context, four integrated priorities, five focus areas and 13 targets for students, staff, leaders, the board and parents. The self-reflection documentation provided by the school demonstrates a focus on the requirements of the DPA and their alignment to the Business Plan 2015–17. The school has also produced a strategic plan based on the four integrated priorities.
- The business plan has been informed by the data collated by the school as part of its participation in the EDvance program. The five focus areas in the business plan have been explicitly aligned to the domains for improvement which is part of the theoretical framework used in that program. Involvement in EDvance during the period 2014–16 resulted in a school improvement plan consisting of three themes: effective instruction and assessment in numeracy; improving outcomes in literacy; and positively engaging the school community. These themes are supported by key performance indicators and used to support the business plan targets and focus areas.

- The format of the business plan was easily understood and measurement of progress was generally able to be demonstrated by staff. While the school acknowledged that some concerns were encountered with certain targets, the reviewers were of the opinion these issues could be addressed using the current format when compiling the next business plan. Despite being challenged by the ambitiousness of some targets the staff and leadership team did not waiver in their commitment to making the business plan a reference point for all that they undertook during the current planning cycle.
- Within the self-reflection document the school provided specific objectives for each of the five focus areas. The reviewers were presented with evidence that 47% of these objectives were “achieved” with the remaining 53% “working towards”. Evidence was also presented which shows a comprehensive analysis of the 13 targets had taken place. The prescribed targets for staff and community were generally “achieved” or “working towards”. However, the academic and non-academic targets for students were more challenging with “National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)” and “engagement” deemed “not achieved”. The school presented documentation which summarises the strategies, analysis and outcomes for each focus area and target within the business plan.
- The school leadership team informed the reviewers that achieving some targets contained in the current business plan had proved to be problematic. To a degree this was due to the aspirational way in which some statements about targets were framed – “NAPLAN achievement will be at or above ‘like-schools’ in all five test areas.” Also, a number of student non-academic targets were too general and subjective in nature. A key learning for this school in compiling the business plan for the next three years is that greater discernment is required in the structure and quantity of focus areas and targets.
- There is a sound understanding and awareness of the Business Plan 2015–17 by staff and board members. The business plan is referred to in all plenary work undertaken by the leadership team, staff and board. The school leadership team and board are aware that areas for improvement arising from this review will need to be considered in the next business planning cycle. The reviewers noted that the business plan is available to parents from school administration staff and that the 2016 and 2015 annual reports both included a reflection on the progress of each of the specific focus areas and targets.

- The school presented evidence which demonstrated that an annual reflective business plan exercise is undertaken by all staff. This process provides considerable detail on both current practices and possible areas requiring further development. A summary of key actions resulting from this exercise is then communicated to the wider school community within the annual report.

Areas of strength

- A strong understanding by staff and the board that the business plan outlines a long-term strategic approach to school improvement.
- Documentation provided by the school demonstrated a focus on the requirements of the DPA and their incorporation into the Business Plan 2015–17.

Area for improvement

- Develop measurable school improvement targets in the new business plan that focus on key aspects of student performance, use relevant data to make meaningful comparisons, can be regularly monitored and are aligned to the strategic direction of the school.

Teaching and Learning

How has the quality of teaching improved and sustained student learning (progress, achievement and engagement)?

Findings

- Three targets within the business plan – “On-entry”, “NAPLAN” and “student achievement Year 1 to Year 6” – focus explicitly on student academic performance (particularly literacy and numeracy). The “On-entry” target concentrates on increasing the number of students who achieve at the expected growth point which proved problematic as many lower range students do not attend Kindergarten in the year prior to attending Pre-primary. The “NAPLAN” target of achieving at or above like-schools in all five areas was not attained in 2015 and 2016 but the data presented in the self-review documents demonstrates that student performance continues to improve across the school. The Year 3 cohort in 2017 achieved this target and they are the first students to have been involved in the Kindergarten to Year 3 whole-school phonological awareness to spelling and reading programs. The “student achievement Year 1 to Year 6” target concentrates on increasing the percentage of students achieving A and B grades and reducing the percentage achieving in D and E grades in literacy and numeracy. This target was achieved in literacy in 2015 and 2016 for both Year 3 and Year 5 but was not achieved in numeracy for Year 5 students.
- The school has produced literacy and numeracy operational plans aligned to student academic performance targets within the business plan. These documents show key focus areas, actions required, strategies to be undertaken, resourcing requirements, designated staff involvement and a timeline for completion. Included in these documents is a review provision that details the progress made in each focus area.
- The business plan also contains three student non-academic targets including an “engagement” component which proved most difficult in terms of measuring student progress. The “social and emotional wellbeing” target used both the National School Survey and the ‘Tell Them from Me’ (completed through EDvance) student survey to obtain data that has been the catalyst for the introduction of the Promoting Alternative THinking Strategies (PATHS) program at the school in 2018. The “attendance” target showed substantial improvement took place during the period 2015–16 and the school was able to identify a range of strategies that were used to achieve this target.

- The second part of the business plan is made up of five focus areas – “curriculum and teaching”, “conditions of learning”, “professional development”, “leadership” and “parent and community support”. In the self-review documentation, it was noted that all five focus areas were either “achieved” or “working towards” achievement. The first four focus areas have a real significance for the teaching and learning agenda at this school and matters pertaining to these four focus areas were discussed in some detail with staff during this review.
- The “curriculum and teaching” focus area included not only the implementation of the Western Australian Curriculum and Assessment Outline but also the development of sequential numeracy and literacy plans across all year levels. The basis of the “conditions of learning” focus area was designed for the school to foster a safe and supportive learning environment. As such, a whole-school behaviour management policy was implemented this year after a collaborative effort involving staff, students, parents and the board. Providing high quality professional learning opportunities to build staff capacity was at the centre of the “professional development” focus area. This included the integration of digital technologies into teaching/learning programs, providing shared opportunities for staff regarding increasing student engagement and establishing a culture of continuous learning through peer observation and feedback. Part of the “leadership” focus was on supporting the concept of teacher leadership in the core areas of literacy, numeracy and early childhood education. It was interesting to note that the focus on learning survey completed by staff in 2016 identified the area of observing classroom teaching as an area requiring further attention at the school.
- Reviewers were presented with evidence of significant changes in the mental models of staff that have impacted positively on teaching and learning at this school. These include: realising that teacher quality plays an essential part in school improvement initiatives; developing a whole-school approach to curriculum development and implementation; acquiring a greater awareness of the contextual issues that impact on student performance; understanding the consequences of student performance data through professional dialogue; and giving emphasis to early childhood teaching/learning.
- In the past three years, the school has been particularly active in structuring a consistent approach to the teaching and learning of literacy throughout the school. It should be noted during this period that two other programs (Spelling Mastery and Morphographic Spelling) are used to support students deemed to be at educational risk. The reviewers observed the Pre-primary to Year 2 literacy program in action during the review. The program is explicit in nature, is well resourced, has a common structure and language, has high levels of student

engagement, provides for differentiation and features a strong presence of school leaders in the teaching/learning process. The reviewers were provided with evidence that this program certainly contributed to the improved Year 3 NAPLAN results recorded earlier this year.

- The numeracy program is an example of the development of a whole-school approach. All classes work on a three week cycle during which time students are graded and taught at their point of need. During this cycle the same content strand is taught throughout the school. An overview document for all year levels has been collaboratively produced which outlines the content areas to be taught as well as the skills, knowledge and understanding expected of students by the end of the school year. Staff are provided with opportunities to share ideas/resources as well as discuss individual student progress during the cycle. The reviewers heard that developing effective instructional strategies and common assessment practices in numeracy had been an improvement priority for the school during its participation in the EDvance program.
- In terms of assessing student achievement, the school has developed a sustainable approach to the collection and analysis of a range of data. It has produced a structured assessment schedule that details core academic and non-academic assessments for all students. It is clear that school leaders pay close attention to this data and use it to identify areas of variation in school performance. However, the same clarity does not appear to exist regarding all staff utilising objective student achievement data to influence their teaching practices.
- Staff have opportunities for a continuous process of reflecting, goal setting, improving professional practice, feedback and review as part of the school's performance management policy. The self-reflection for teaching staff is based on the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers and specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time limited goals developed in a conversation with the principal. The same process applies for support staff apart from the self-reflection which is based on their job description form. In terms of further developing teacher quality the school leaders recognise the importance of professional learning and wish to address this internally through peer observation and feedback. They are also aware that while feedback is among the most powerful moderators of learning, its effects are also among the most variable.

Areas of strength

- Staff promote and maintain an environment reflective of high and explicit expectations that all students will learn successfully.
- Effective leadership for teaching and learning improvements particularly in the early years' programs.
- Use of data to inform school-level decisions, interventions and initiatives and to identify areas for overall school improvement.
- Purposeful collaboration among staff in developing clear curriculum/learning standards at class and school levels.
- Attainment levels in literacy and numeracy as a central feature of the school's priorities for improvement.

Area for improvement

- Investigate models of professional learning that have clear criteria for success to enhance pedagogical expertise through observation of effective teaching practices, focused feedback and peer coaching.

Student Performance Monitoring

How well established are the school's self-assessment practices in accounting for school improvement?

Findings

- Evidence of effective monitoring of the business plan was provided in documentation of a comprehensive review of all focus areas. Progress of achievements for each focus area is described with evidence from operational plans for literacy and numeracy as well as assessment and reporting schedules. The extent of the progress was analysed and recommendations made for further development and improvements. A summative system of 'traffic lights' indicates the level of achievement for each goal.
- Self-reflection documentation provided by the school indicates the standing of each of the targets of the business plan (whether "achieved", "working towards" or "not achieved"). The reviewers were provided with evidence showing triangulated judgements were made primarily by the school leaders and staff. With regards to targets and focus areas "not achieved" or "working towards" within the 2015 to 2017 cycle, the school proposed to give due consideration for inclusion in the new business plan.
- Committees for literacy and numeracy provide continuous oversight of the student data including NAPLAN and On-entry testing, effectiveness of strategies, trials of new programs and ongoing review. Through the committees, curriculum implementation and monitoring decisions are made and recommended for implementation across the school. From operational plans which link directly to the business plan, processes were implemented ensuring clarity on what is to be achieved, progress to date and how to monitor progress.
- Teachers explained that monitoring the performance of each student was embedded across the school. They had made "knowing how well students are going" an important component of their teaching practice. They confirmed their use of daily assessments, assessment tracking sheets, the 'data wall', 'cold' and 'hot' tasks (pre-and post-assessments) and whole-school discussions during staff meetings to analyse the effectiveness of strategies and progress of students.
- The 'data wall' provides a visual display to teachers of students' performance. For each student, performance in spelling, vocabulary, reading, numeracy and science, technology, engineering and mathematics is displayed as coloured tags relevant to their year group and expected level of progress. The 'data wall' is an

easy reference for students at educational risk as well as those needing extension activities.

- Students are tested for progress in: spelling through Cracking the Code (Kindergarten and Pre-primary), Letters and Sounds (Pre-primary to Year 3) and Words their Way (Year 4 to Year 6); in reading through PM Benchmark Reading Assessment resources (Pre-primary to Year 3), Literacy Pro (Year 3 to Year 6) and Lexile reading levels; in vocabulary through Word Grammar Fun and Oxford Word; in numeracy through Mathletics and numeracy fluency testing; and in coding through School Curriculum and Standards Authority work samples.
- The close monitoring of individual students provides the basis for ensuring a differentiated curriculum with extension activities and individual education plans (IEPs) where required are appropriately targeted.
- The use of the National Quality Standard audits to evaluate the school's provision of the Kindergarten to Year 2 programs has been used effectively to upgrade activities, the learning environment and facilities.
- The annual reports, available on the website, report on all focus areas of the business plan. Descriptors of strategies, indicators of progress for the year and goals for the following year are also tabled. Comprehensive information is provided on the targets. Results of On-entry testing, NAPLAN and non-academic improvement targets are clearly presented as tables, graphs with progress made from the previous year, comparisons with like-schools and State benchmarks, which makes information easily accessible to parents and the community. Parent surveys and plans for further developments across the school in response to findings are also included.
- Monitoring practices have been planned to effectively track students' learning and to guide teaching and learning practices. Processes are embedded at class and whole-school levels and provide a sound basis for decisions on school improvement. Continuing with the approaches adopted to date will further embed and enhance school improvement.

Areas of strength

- A well-structured and systematic approach to monitoring the effectiveness of the business plan and students' performance.
- The adoption, by teachers, of a range of monitoring practices including school-based and standardised testing to improve teaching and learning.

Program Delivery

How well has the school performed in providing education programs that promote learning and wellbeing for all students?

Findings

- Education programs delivered at the school are in accordance with the *School Education Act 1999* and *School Education Regulations 2000* as evidenced in the findings of the school's policies, activities and programs.
- One of the school's objectives is "motivated and engaged students via appropriate learning programs". From interviews with students, teachers and classroom visits it was evident that the culture of the school is student-centred, caters for the wide range of cultural and learning needs and provides a caring environment. When interviewed, students reported the positive features of the school as: "an open mindedness at the school where all cultures are valued; unique opportunities including choice in sport; staff and students who care for each other; and the greenery and grounds."
- The needs of the high percentage of EAL/D students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds are catered for through early intervention, the literacy strategies, IEPs and engagement with parents to encourage participation in the school. In addition to activities such as Harmony Day, parents have prepared international (Filipino, Algerian and Lebanese) lunches at the canteen, participate in the Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) and engage in other school activities.
- A "school's values" program underpins the positive behaviours of students in classes and the playground and is promoted and acknowledged at school assemblies. A specific value is introduced and appropriate behaviours related to that value rewarded over the next two weeks.
- The school has eight Aboriginal students attending the school. While staff are aware of the Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework, attention has not been given to implementation due to the constraints of time and competing priorities. An Aboriginal bush tucker garden has been developed.
- From the 2016 'Tell Them from Me' student survey the school has assessed student engagement in terms of sense of belonging, participation and positive relationships. Generally, the school performed above the norm in all areas except for positive behaviour, which was marginally below.

- The National School Survey responses showed that more than 90% of staff, 85% of parents and more than 80% of students felt safe at the school. While generally there was satisfaction with the school's management of behaviour, with results showing 65% of behaviour was dealt with in a timely manner and 74% support for positive behaviour, the school has responded with revision of the behaviour policy and procedures. A whole-school approach of warnings and consequences has been implemented. Individual behaviour plans are implemented for students with disruptive behaviour.
- Survey results indicated the need for parents to be better informed of their child's social and emotional development. The school is planning to respond with PATHS – a social and emotional development program – in 2018.
- The facilities and surrounding grounds have enabled safe and creative play, team activities and learning opportunities with outdoor classroom spaces, a sensory garden, soccer on the oval at breaks and items for play.
- Attendance rates shows a steady improvement from 92.1% in 2014 to 94.4 % in 2016, above like-schools at 92.8%. In addition, there has been a 4% increase in students attending 90% or more of the time. The school has an operational plan, attendance policy, clarity on expectations and processes for interacting with parents as required.
- The school has well-structured routines known by staff and students alike. Whole-school programs and use of blocks of dedicated time for literacy and numeracy enable management of differentiated curriculum and continuity of learning programs. Adjustments to times for breaks, ordered playground management and duties, transition of groups between classes, acknowledgement of positive behaviours and duty data has created smooth operations throughout the day.
- Several clubs operate during breaks on a weekly schedule including clubs for chess, coding, Pokémon, suitcase play and travel smart. Soccer on the oval is a daily event during breaks. A vegetable garden and worm farm managed by a parent, sports events and choir are popular activities while activities before school such as tennis, badminton and gymnastics add to the breadth of opportunities and interests.
- Staff indicated that the school is at a formative stage of addressing the wellbeing of students. Solid foundations for routines, safety, creativity and catering for a diverse range of needs are established. The school regularly seeks the views of parents, monitors then responds to the data on attendance, engagement and interests of students. With plans already under development and the employment

of a chaplain, the school is well placed to move to the next level of pastoral care and support for the wellbeing of students.

Areas of strength

- The values program and culture of care for all students.
- Actively seeking feedback from parents on school improvement and the responsiveness of the school to issues raised.
- The variety of opportunities for students to engage in areas of interest.

Area for improvement

- Develop and implement a social and emotional program to support students' wellbeing and pastoral needs.

Resourcing and Support

How well has the school established systems to monitor and review the allocation of resources to meet strategic and operational priorities?

Findings

- Effective systems and structures such as budgeting, monitoring and internal controls to ensure best value in terms of expenditure are embedded into school processes. Financial transactions are closely monitored by the principal and manager corporate services so that they align with strategic school improvement initiatives. During the current business planning cycle the school has twice successfully completed the school audit control self-assessment questionnaire.
- A finance committee made up of four staff members meets each term to review the overall financial position, consider specific funding submissions and ensure resources are being directed to the achievement of improved outcomes for identified students. Apart from approving expenditure items and endorsing draft budget documents, the board is provided with a detailed overview of the school's financial position at every meeting.
- In recent years, the school has improved its financial position and now has cash reserves on hand. The voluntary contributions collection rate from families is greater than 80% which may be reflection of the school's obligation not to burden parents with unaffordable fees/charges. The reviewers were informed by the manager corporate services that most of the annual funding is used to resource programs in the year in which funds are received. Therefore, directives regarding minimum expenditure targets are consistently met.
- The reviewers were informed there had been considerable change to the decision-making process in the past three years regarding the allocation of school resources. Specifically, this has been in acquiring resources to support the whole-school approach, becoming the preferred model for curriculum initiatives. Over the duration of the business plan, the school has been particularly mindful to ensure that human and financial resources were flexible enough to respond to emerging projects as well as focusing on the core areas of literacy, numeracy and professional learning.
- The reviewers noted from the classroom visits that a range of resources was used to support approaches to teaching and learning to challenge and extend students at all levels of their learning. Upgraded information and communications technology (ICT) is provided in both the ICT room and classrooms. With the implementation of a design and technologies plan in 2018, the school is currently

considering lease arrangements for additional computers. Such an arrangement would have resourcing implications during the period of the next school business plan.

- Building strong and sustainable partnerships have been a prominent part of the school's business plan. The reviewers were presented with details of events designed to enhance the relationships between the school and parents, other educational organisations and the wider community. The school has made effective use of survey instruments to gain clarity about developing a culture of 'parents as partners'. The school leadership team articulated the perceived benefits of the partnerships that the school has with the wider community.
- The workforce plan reflects the context of the school and identifies challenges regarding succession planning, gender balance, risk management and recruitment. The reviewers were presented with documentation outlining strategies to address the challenges. The most significant challenge was staff on leave for an extended period. The principal advised this created some complications in attracting and retaining suitable replacement staff.
- Despite being 40 years old, buildings are well maintained with playground areas being both attractive and extensive. Staff have access to multiple learning areas to deliver the curriculum with specialist facilities for ICT, physical education, science, music and visual arts. The reviewers were informed of considerable refurbishment work recently undertaken and further projects identified for 2018.
- The school produces a comprehensive annual report that provides detailed information on school operations, student performance data, the development of business plan focus areas and identified school improvement priorities.

Areas of strength

- Use of resources is aligned to school improvement goals to maximise the impact on teaching and learning.
- The workforce plan indicates effective management of human resource issues pertaining to improving teaching and student learning and wellbeing.

School Board

How effective has the board been in carrying out its functions, roles and responsibilities?

Findings

- Board membership complies with the *School Education Act 1999* and *School Education Regulations 2000*. Four parent members with students in a range of year levels were elected to the board and one has undertaken the role of chair since the school became an IPS. Two elected staff and the principal complete the membership of the board. Since formation, the membership has remained relatively stable thereby enabling managed changes and continuity. Minutes of meetings indicate a skills audit of the members was conducted and profiles added to the website. Six meetings have been held annually, one as an open meeting for community members to attend.
- A code of conduct signed by members provides clarity to expected behaviours of each board member, their role and principles of working together and with the school community. Evidence from board minutes show terms of reference were discussed and understanding of the role of a school board with separation from operational issues confirmed. Potential conflicts of interest are addressed at the commencement of each meeting. Documentation for the two subcommittees, marketing and school beautification, have been formulated.
- At the time of formation in 2015, board members attended a comprehensive training program provided by the Department of Education. A recent member has not participated in training but was prepared for the role by attending several open meetings of other primary schools to gain an understanding of board governance.
- The focus of meetings, as evidenced by the minutes and from interviews with board members, is on the implementation of the business plan. Meetings are structured to replicate the focus areas of the business plan ensuring discussion is on strategic areas including student performance targets. The board engages with school improvement with reports from the principal on school review processes, the community feedback through analysis of surveys and issues to be addressed as a result such as the review of the school's behaviour management policy.

- The board reported on lively discussions on NAPLAN data, fees and charges, financial reports and the school budget. The DPA, business plan and annual reports are discussed and endorsed by the board. Members agreed there was scope for deeper discussion and debate of issues relating to school improvement.
- Communication from the board to the community is achieved through publication of members' profiles and minutes on the website, information in the newsletter and interaction of members with other parents. Members are advised of the challenges in engaging the community in board issues especially with parents of EAL/D students.
- The board is yet to fully engage with the process of the school's self-review. The results of the process using a system of 'traffic lights' has been presented to the board and members advised they plan to engage with the review information and input to the next business plan. Analysis and critical discussion on the school's performance on focus areas and targets of the business plan is encouraged.
- A review of the board's progress towards achieving the expected functions has been completed. However, to date, a review of the board's own performance to identify areas of effectiveness and where improvements could be made has not been conducted.
- In the first cycle of the school as an IPS, the board has established sound foundations for ongoing governance through terms of reference and a code of conduct as guidance. While most current members have undergone relevant training, and understand their roles, induction and training needs to be available for new members. The board is focused on strategic issues including the progress of implementation of the business plan and achievement of targets.

Areas of strength

- Strong leadership from the chair in guiding the board towards sound governance and linking the school with the community.
- Establishment of procedures including structured agendas, a code of conduct, terms of reference and clear minutes available on the website.

Areas for improvement

- Develop an induction and training package to be used for newly appointed board members.
- Develop and implement processes to enable the board to review its performance.
- Create and encourage opportunities and an understanding of the importance of challenging conversations and debate on the school's performance and student achievements.

Conclusion

Considerable progress has been made in developing the culture of Phoenix Primary School to focus on collaboration, professional learning and in establishing a collective approach to school improvement. Through the use and support of the EDvance program the school has adopted an evidence-based approach to decisions and a framework on which to develop the “preconditions for improvement”. Hard work, consistency and responsiveness to the learning needs of students have laid the foundation for significant progress in students’ learning and achievements.

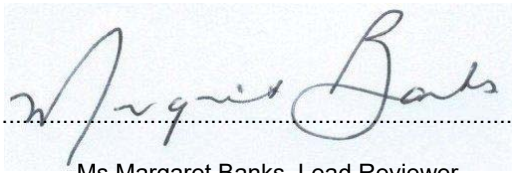
The school has made significant progress through shared leadership, expertise and a commitment to improvement. Staff demonstrated they are motivated, willing to take up new programs and new ways of working to improve outcomes for students. Systems and processes have created effective routines and an improved learning environment with upgraded furnishings and equipment. Outdoor areas are attractive and well maintained with added features to enhance play and learning.

A vision for the school to become the ‘community school’ is well founded. Families and parents are made welcome with support of interpreter services where required. School events and social activities demonstrate a strong valuing of culture and family backgrounds and are embedded in school practices. An energetic P&C and board are ensuring parent involvement is supporting the direction enabled by the status of IPS.

Declaration

We confirm the information in this document is, to the best of our knowledge and based on the verification of the evidence provided by Phoenix Primary School, true and correct.

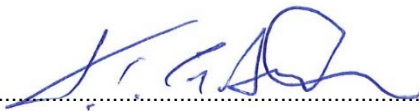
The principal and board chair have had an opportunity to comment on any matters of fact contained within this document.



Ms Margaret Banks, Lead Reviewer

1 February 2018

Date



Mr Steve Gibson, Reviewer

1 February 2018

Date



Mr Ken Perris, Director
Independent Public School Review

7 February 2018

Date