



Department of
Education

Shaping the future

Comet Bay College

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

Context

Comet Bay College is located in the coastal suburb of Secret Harbour, approximately 65 kilometres south of Perth, within the South Metropolitan Education Region.

With an Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage of 1005 (decile 4), the college currently enrolls 1904 students from Year 7 to Year 12.

Opening in 2006, Comet Bay College achieved Independent Public School status in 2012 and support for the school is provided by the College Board.

The College has been a Department of Education endorsed Gifted and Talented Academic Program school since 2007.

The first Public School Review of Comet Bay College 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 succinct and reflective school self-assessment.

The following aspects of the school's self-assessment process are confirmed:

- Systematic evaluation of practices to monitor progress against strategic goals and identify areas for growth is a feature of the college. This current cycle of review formed a component of the ongoing process of reflection and analysis.
- The college's preparation for the Public School Review was collaborative and inclusive, with responsibility distributed through the identification of domain leaders and the Principal responsible for bringing together the narrative.
- Domain leaders engaged staff in workshops, conducting self-reflection, analysis, and action planning against the Standard.
- Leaders carefully considered the selection of quality evidence to provide rich and broad illustrations of effective practice within each domain.
- Planned actions were well-considered and aligned with evidence and analysis.
- College staff and students, Board members, and external partners, including the Principal of Comet Bay Primary School and an Australian Defence Force representative, contributed to discussions during the validation visit, providing diverse perspectives and genuine reflections that confirmed the college's self-assessment.

The following recommendation is made:

- Continue to embed self-assessment practices, including ongoing opportunities for staff engagement in reflection on progress and performance against the Standard.

Relationships and partnerships

Authentic relationships between students, staff, parents and the broader community create a culture of shared responsibility and are focused on the college's motto and strategic intent to 'Seek Excellence'.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Mutually beneficial partnerships are strategically established and nurtured to provide diverse opportunities for students. Strong connections with sporting organisations through the Australian Football Specialist Program and relationships with the Australian Defence Force and local industry enrich the learning experiences and pathways provided by the college.
- Premised on a foundation of collective responsibility, the college collaborates with local primary schools to identify and support the education of Gifted and Talented students from Years 1 to 6 through the provision of the Nautilus Club. The program fosters students higher-order thinking skills and supports Year 7 transition.
- Strong endorsement for the school from the Board, parents, students and staff is clear. A shared sense of commitment and belonging to the school is evident amongst each group.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Refine communication channels considering the most effective use of Compass and Connect to address parent feedback on the frequency and clarity of information provided by the school.
- Continue to upskill members of the Board to enable a higher level of rigour in the strategic governance of the college.

Learning environment

A strong student services culture provides wrap-around support to students and their families through the provision of tailored support mechanisms.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Clear expectations of student behaviour articulated and shared through explicit Positive Behaviour Support lessons in homeroom have led to a calm and safe learning environment. Students highly value the college's recognition and rewards system.
- Notable progress towards increasing cultural responsiveness at the college has been led by the passionate Aboriginal and Islander education officer who has been empowered to share his expertise. The Caring for Country program, development of Aboriginal artworks, and creation of the Yarning Circle have provided valuable opportunities for students and the community to deepen their understanding of Aboriginal culture.
- Student attendance is seen as a shared responsibility with clearly defined levels of monitoring and support. The student services team demonstrated a united commitment to improving the participation of all students.
- A comprehensive psychosocial risk assessment has been undertaken, demonstrating a proactive and preventative commitment to providing a college environment where all can flourish.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Continue implementing Positive Behaviour Support across the school and leveraging its framework to foster a positive workplace culture by reinforcing clear expectations around student and staff conduct and professionalism.
- Enhance student voice by regularly gathering student feedback and increasing their role in decision making through the School Ambassador program.
- Further enhance cultural responsiveness by expanding opportunities for students and staff to learn about Aboriginal culture, histories and perspectives.

Leadership

The Principal and leadership team have established a trusting and inclusive culture in which staff are empowered to develop and lead school improvement initiatives in line with the college's strategic direction.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The collaboratively developed 2024-2026 Business Plan is genuinely translated into practice by staff, who feel a strong sense of ownership through the plan's inclusive development and articulated moral purpose.
- Change processes are well-managed, with training, resourcing and support provided to ensure successful and sustainable implementation of new approaches.
- Effective pedagogical leadership enhances teaching practices throughout the college. Deans and associate deans apply their instructional coaching training to conduct classroom observations and provide feedback, to support consistent and connected practice to thrive and improve student outcomes.
- Staff leadership opportunities are encouraged and supported. Connected distributed leadership is fostered through professional learning, intentional mentoring partnerships, and succession planning.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Develop and implement a differentiated professional learning strategy to support the aspirations of teachers at various stages of their career development.
- Consider engaging with professional learning delivered by the Leadership Institute to complement in-house leadership programs and develop a consistent language and approach to leadership.
- Review, update and communicate leadership roles and responsibilities to ensure all staff understand the college's leadership structures and portfolios.

Use of resources

The college implements strategic and robust processes to ensure that expenditure is responsive to the needs of students. Clear connections between school budgeting and planning are evident.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- A thoughtful and well-communicated response to the recent fire and the resulting loss of classrooms assisted to minimise the logistical and emotional impact on the college community. The leadership team's collaborative efforts ensured that the students' access to quality education remained largely uninterrupted.
- The allocation of student characteristics and targeted initiatives funding is aimed at supporting students' needs. The creation of the RESET Room, a space where students can regulate their emotions in a safe and supervised environment, directly addresses the needs identified among the student population.
- A proactive strategy shapes resource management. Mobilising staff expertise to create a modern information and communications technology infrastructure ensures that the school is well-prepared for future needs. Access to tools such as the Augmented Reality Sandbox and Virtual Reality laboratory enhances the opportunities available to students.
- The establishment of a clear asset replacement schedule guarantees effective resource allocation to support the increasing college population.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Establish clear and measurable targets to validate purchasing decisions in line with student characteristics funding, student needs, and the strategic priorities of the school.
- Develop a strategic plan to address the maintenance and development of buildings and grounds.

Teaching quality

The college is committed to continuously improving teaching practice to ensure student success. Teachers embrace feedback from school leaders, colleagues, and students to inform development of their practice.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- Significant investment fosters consistency of teaching practice through professional learning opportunities, resources, and collaborative support to ensure the implementation of whole-school practices, particularly the embedded 'Comet Bay Way' instructional model.
- Staff develop and implement comprehensive personalised planning for students at educational risk to differentiate curriculum delivery and enhance student achievement. Highly regarded education assistants work alongside teachers to support student learning.
- Learning area operational plans map the implementation and review of the Western Australian Curriculum from Years 7-10. Staff collaborate on planning and moderation to ensure valid judgements of student achievement.
- Diverse pathways to post-school success are available for students, including varied options for university entry to complement the ATAR¹, General courses, School to Employment Program and VET² offerings. The highly skilled and passionate career practitioner has established valuable connections with industry and offers tailored support to students.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Implement a schedule for the collection and analysis of system and school-based student achievement data to differentiate the curriculum and assess the impact of instructional practices in Years 7-10.
- Establish a consistent method for developing and reviewing course and assessment outlines, along with moderation practices.

Student achievement and progress

Comet Bay College has established and maintained high levels of senior school student achievement resulting from a commitment to personalised pathway planning.

Commendations

The review team validate the following:

- The median ATAR achieved by Year 12 students continues to exceed that of like schools.
- A shared responsibility for student achievement of their OLNA³ qualification drives a comprehensive student support approach, including the delivery of intensive classes, resulting in a high OLNA attainment rate.
- Continuous monitoring of student achievement and the provision of GROWTH⁴ coaching supports students in achieving their goals throughout Years 11 and 12.
- Parents are well-informed of student achievement and progress through the use of Connect and are engaged in pathway planning.

Recommendations

The review team support the following:

- Re-establish data collection and student tracking processes to closely monitor and track student achievement and progress across the lower secondary years.
- Seek support from regional and statewide services to introduce targeted engagement programs in Years 7-10 aimed at reducing disruption and improving student achievement.
- Expand on the comprehensive pathway planning model evident in Years 10-12 by adopting this approach in the lower school to ensure students are well informed and empowered to achieve their highest potential.

Reviewers

Melanie Langley
Director, Public School Review

Elizabeth Smith
Principal, Joseph Banks Secondary College
Peer Reviewer

Endorsement

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

Your next school review is to be scheduled for 2028. You will be formally notified in the 2 terms leading up to your school's scheduled review.



Steven Watson
Deputy Director General, Schools

References

- 1 Australian Tertiary Admission Rank
- 2 Vocational Education and Training
- 3 Online Literacy and Numeracy Assessment
- 4 Goals, Reality, Options, Will, Tactics, Habits