Roebuck Primary School

2015

Independent Review Findings
Disclaimer

This document reports the findings of the Department of Education Services' review and verification of the school’s self-review. The school's self-review has been complemented by information provided by the Department of Education and the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority.

The findings of the independent review are forwarded to the School Principal, the Board Chair, the Director General of Education and the Minister for Education.

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School and Review Details

Principal: Mr Kelvin Shem
Board Chair: Ms Nicola Walters
School Location: Spoonbill Ave Broome WA 6725
School Classification: PS Class 5
Number of Students: 549
Reviewers: Mrs Kerry Usher (Lead); Ms Janine Milton

Purpose of the Review

The purpose of the independent review is to provide assurance to the school and its community, the Director General of Education and the Minister for Education on the extent to which the school has met its commitments as outlined in its Delivery and Performance Agreement (DPA) and associated Business Plan.

The focus of the review is on:

- how well the school has implemented self-review
- how well the school has improved student learning (achievement, progress and engagement) for all students
- how well the school has created an environment that promotes learning and student well-being
- how well the school is placed to sustain and improve its performance.
Review Methodology

The school has been required, under the DPA, to undertake annual self-assessments of its performance. The outcome of these assessments formed the basis for the school’s self-review. The school sent its self-review documentation to the IPS Review Team, Department of Education Services, one month prior to the commencement of the review.

The IPS reviewers supplemented the information provided by the school 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
- the Department of Education School Performance Monitoring System
- Schools Online reports.

Reviewers analysed the evidence presented in the school’s self-review documentation to verify achievement and developed lines of inquiry where further verification was required.

An agenda for the review visit was subsequently negotiated with the Principal to enable the gathering of evidence to verify claims made by the school. During the review visit the reviewers sourced evidence to support the school’s self-review claims through observation and discussion with leaders, teaching and support staff, board members, parents and students. During the visit, Principals and Board Chairs in the cluster met with the reviewers to discuss the achievement of the cluster’s purpose.

The evidence provided by the school, along with information gathered by the reviewers prior to and during the review visits, was used as the basis for the verification of how well the school has met its commitments as outlined in the DPA and Business Plan.

This document reports on the findings of the independent review.
School Context

What are the important features of this school's context that have an impact on student learning?

Roebuck Primary School is situated in the town of Broome in the Kimberley region of Western Australia. Broome is the administrative hub for government services in the region as well as a service centre for commerce and industry. It is also a national and international tourist centre. The Broome economy is dependent on mining (particularly oil and gas), agriculture, tourism and pearling and has suffered some decline in recent years. This has meant that employment is a key factor in maintaining residency in the town.

In 2000, Roebuck Primary School was opened as the first regional 'school in houses'. The school was relocated to its current permanent site in 2006 where a gradual building process occurred extending the school to its current capacity by 2009. In 2014, due to residential growth in the area, the school exceeded its capacity and required an additional nine transportable classrooms to cater for a student population of 735 students. Following the opening of the Broome North Primary School in 2015, Roebuck Primary School now has an enrolment of 549 students.

Since its commencement in 2000, the school has had nine principals. The school commenced as an Independent Public School with a fixed-term principal appointee for six months, as the substantive Principal had taken up another position. The permanent appointment of the current Principal took place in June 2013 following this period of leadership change.

In 2015, the Roebuck Primary School local intake area consists predominantly of families of government workers (police, education, health, local government and federal and State employees), local business owners and those in self-employed trades. The school is unique in that its Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) is higher than other Broome schools at 1030 and reflects the economic and social backgrounds of its families. The inclusion of a high percentage of fixed-tenure employment contracts, particularly for government workers, and several caravan parks where holidaying and seasonal workers reside during the dry season, has contributed to a student transiency rate of 30%. It is expected that, with the opening of Broome North Primary School, the school population will stabilise and transiency rates will be reduced.
Many of the students attending the school have enrolled as a result of the development of Broome Airport Corporation’s north and south runway project and the private development of Roebuck Estate, which includes both privately-owned and rental housing. Eight per cent of the school’s students are Aboriginal and 5% of students have language backgrounds other than English. Attendance data for 2014 indicates an average attendance of 93.1% which is slightly lower than like schools and above the State average. In 2015, the rate is below expected levels, which the school attributes to families taking holidays outside prescribed school vacation times.

The summary of the school’s Workforce Plan outlines factors relating to staff management. A major readjustment occurred with the transition of Year 7 students to secondary education and the opening of Broome North Primary School, which impacted on student numbers and required a corresponding adjustment to the staff profile. Workforce trends have been recognised and managed to enable the school to operate effectively in 2015.

The school is a member of the Broome Cluster of Independent Public Schools which commenced its activities formally in 2013 and now operates with the theme of ‘five schools, one K–12 community’ following the recent inclusion of Broome North Primary School. Local partnerships have been developed with Waardi Ltd to support the Language Acquisition Program Schools (LAPS) focus on pre-primary teachers’ professional learning to implement small group strategies for improved literacy outcomes. The school has also engaged with Nyamba Buru Yawuru Ltd to ensure student outcomes for the cross-curricular priorities on Aboriginal histories and culture are developed.

The Roebuck Primary School Board is developing its governance role and building the strength of its members. The Board Chair is proactive in leading the Board and in ensuring that members have access to, and an understanding of, student performance information, oversight of the main board responsibilities and in supporting the school’s direction. The Board Chair plays an active role in the Broome Cluster of Independent Public Schools.
The School’s Self-Review Process

*How effective was the school’s self-review in accounting for its performance during the period of the DPA and Business Plan?*

The staff have conducted self-review and analysis of school performance against the obligations in the DPA and the Business Plan targets. The 2014 Annual Report indicates targets that have been achieved and those that have not yet been met. It also includes comparative assessments against like schools and progress made between 2012 and 2014 for students in Years 3–5 and 5–7 using National Assessment Program—Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) data.

The 2014 self-review determined that many of the academic performance targets needed refinement and to be made more meaningful in meeting student needs. The realignment of the Business Plan for 2015 has increased their relevance to teaching and learning. The resulting stronger focus on planning for improvement uses the available data to develop a whole-school approach to improve consistency of reporting and the identification of students requiring additional support through profiling. The school’s newly developed distributive leadership framework is supporting this direction. Team leaders are working with staff on an approach to developing school, cohort and year-level profiles of students. The aim is to ensure that a differentiated curriculum is offered to better cater for the needs of all students. In discussions with staff, reviewers were made aware of the positive impact of the leadership model on staff understanding, awareness and engagement with data analysis. The reviewers affirm the direction taken by school leaders of greater involvement by staff in the analysis of student performance to enhance the transfer of information to classroom planning.

The emphasis on whole-school approaches to improve teaching and learning has a focus on student outcomes with the ongoing assessment of progress based on achievement of milestones as determinants of success used for developing recommendations for future planning. Equally, the strategic improvement targets based on performance in NAPLAN have been analysed to develop directions for whole-school and classroom planning that aim to improve learning. This process has included refining and clarifying targets that are now more specific and measurable and the development of greater staff ownership of the Business Plan.
The school is in the third year of its Business Plan with the Principal in his second year of leading the school’s improvement agenda. The move to a whole-school approach has a focus on developing staff leadership and practice in supporting student needs. Leadership is committed to developing stronger links between professional learning and more accurate assessment of student performance.

The school has been through a period of instability with leadership changes, enrolment variability and subsequent staff changes that have impacted on the quality of its self-review processes and the setting of future directions. With many of those issues now resolved, it is apparent that self-review processes that engage all staff have the potential to directly influence classroom practice.
School Performance—Student Learning

How well has the school performed in improving learning (achievement, progress and engagement) for all students?

The 2013–2015 Business Plan articulates strategies to achieve the school's vision: 'Roebuck Primary staff, students and community will work together to provide a centre for learning excellence. A school responsive to the changing needs of society, where mutual respect, independent thinking and emotional well-being are promoted with the aim of giving our students the skills to be valued citizens'.

The 2013–2015 Business Plan has four priority areas and goals:

- Quality Teaching and Learning. 'By the end of 2015, Roebuck Primary School will have implemented a whole-school approach to teaching and learning incorporating instructional literacy practices that result in greater student engagement and improved learning outcomes.'

- Building a Performance and Development Culture. 'By the end of 2015, Roebuck Primary School will have built an effective whole-school approach to performance and development so that all staff are motivated, highly effective, consciously competent and have an agreed understanding of moral purpose in relation to systemic and contextual standards and expectations.'

- Australian Curriculum. 'By the end of 2015, Roebuck Primary School will have implemented the Australian Curriculum—as per School Curriculum and Standards Authority (SCSA) implementation schedule—so that teachers are consciously competent with the Australian Curriculum and our students develop knowledge, skills, behaviours and dispositions that can be utilised within their learning and in their lives outside school.'

- Community Partnerships. 'By the end of 2015, Roebuck Primary School will continue to develop and sustain positive and productive partnerships with a range of stakeholders to improve and enrich the learning outcomes of students.'

The targets set in the Business Plan are medium-to long-term targets providing an indication of progress towards achievement of the goals. Student academic targets are primarily based on NAPLAN data. The staff have set high expectations by developing targets aimed at the Australian mean due to its higher-than-average ICSEA rating of 1030.
With a 30% student transiency rate, stable-cohort data has been selected to accurately demonstrate the school’s impact on student learning and progress.


The school has 13 academic targets based on performance in NAPLAN, seven related to literacy and six related to numeracy. Some targets are nominated as benchmark targets and some as aspirational targets. These targets use a range of comparative datasets: Australian means, percentages of stable cohort in the 20% and middle 60% profile, benchmarks, and State mean progress from Year 3 to Year 5 and from Year 5 to Year 7. This range of comparative datasets could be simplified so as to ensure targets are easily measurable for the purposes of the school’s self-review process.

The reviewers noted that the school’s analysis of the extent to which targets had been met contained information regarding the implementation of strategies rather than an analysis of the achievement of outcomes. In some cases this was due to targets being focused on the operational milestones rather than student outcomes and in some cases the analysis contained broad statements that were not specific enough to define areas of strength and weakness. The reviewers supplemented information gained through interviews and observation to verify the school’s analysis.

The first benchmark targets for literacy and numeracy achievement in Years 3, 5 and 7 are to be at least comparable to the Australian mean. The reviewers verify the judgement of the staff that this target had not been achieved in any test in 2014; however, it was noted that all assessments (including all tests for Year 7) were close to achieving it in both literacy and numeracy. This demonstrates strong progress towards achievement of the benchmark targets.

The second benchmark target stated that student achievement (stable cohort) in literacy and numeracy would reflect at least the Australian profile of top 20%, middle 60% and bottom 20% from Years 3 to 5 and from Years 5 to 7 from 2012 to 2014.
The school met the targeted profile in Year 7 reading only. The reviewers confirmed that the percentage of students in the bottom 20% was reduced and the percentage of students in the top 20% increased in numeracy, reading and writing, demonstrating an upwards shift and progress being made.

Despite having very few Aboriginal students, the school had specified targets for them in both literacy and numeracy. Benchmark targets aimed for similar percentages of Aboriginal students in the top 20%, middle 60% and bottom 20% to the Australian School profile. The school profiled the performance of 21 Aboriginal students in 2014 NAPLAN tests. Four did not sit the tests. All Year 3 Aboriginal students performed at or above benchmark levels and those in Years 5 and 7 performed across a wide range.

The fourth benchmark target was to decrease the number of non-Aboriginal students below the minimum benchmark in literacy. The school reported on the small number of students assessed with the Year 3 cohort meeting the target and Years 5 and 7 students below the benchmark. Students who scored below the National Minimum Standard in at least one test now have individual education plans in place to improve their learning outcomes.

The first of the aspirational targets was for the school’s mean growth in each test of literacy and numeracy from 2012–2014 (stable cohort) to be comparable or greater than the State mean growth. The staff reported that there was significant improvement from Year 3 to Year 7 with better student progress in writing with parity in reading, punctuation and grammar and below expectations in numeracy when compared with the State mean growth. Reviewers noted that from Year 3 in 2012 to Year 5 in 2014, the school achieved this target in numeracy, reading and spelling and demonstrated progress. Targets were not met in writing and punctuation and grammar. Progress of the school’s stable cohorts progressing from Year 5 in 2012 to Year 7 in 2014 was below the State mean progress in all areas other than grammar and punctuation. When compared to Australian data in My School® assessments, Roebuck students from Years 3–5 and 5–7 demonstrated progress, but in most areas are below similar Australian schools’ scores.

The second aspirational target aimed for more than 20% of students to be in the top 20% of the State profile in all literacy tests and numeracy. In Year 3, the school achieved the target in grammar and punctuation. In Year 5 reading, spelling and writing the target was also achieved with all other tests having lower percentages in the top 20%.
The 2014 Year 7 cohort also achieved the target for reading, spelling, numeracy and grammar and punctuation. Reviewers noted that data for the top 20% is an important goal for the school to maintain as there are many students demonstrating strong academic capacity and willingness to excel.

The third aspirational target aimed at increasing the number of Aboriginal students in the middle 60% in literacy and numeracy assessments. The school reported that, while substantial progress had been made in Year 3–5 progress and achievement for Aboriginal students, most in Year 5–7 were below the minimum benchmark. These targets are being reassessed for future planning.

The Business Plan documents two student performance targets in early childhood; firstly, regarding the school meeting the Roebuck Primary School progression standards as per the scope and sequence 'Oral to Literate' continuum based on the Statewide Speech and Language profile and secondly, meeting or exceeding the numeracy standard in on-entry testing. The school reports that pre-primary students are meeting expected literacy standards and exceeding numeracy standards. Reviewers verified this claim by viewing a comprehensive analysis of the on-entry performance data where high standards are being achieved in both literacy and numeracy. Areas of cohort strength and weakness were noted and individual students identified for individualised intervention.

The school’s students’ comparative performance in literacy and numeracy in the 2014 NAPLAN tests was in the expected range in all assessments, except for Year 7 reading and spelling, which were more than one standard deviation below expected levels. Compared with Australian schools, performance from Year 3 to 5 was predominantly in the higher progress/lower achievement quartile with performance from Years 5 to 7 predominantly in the lower performance/lower achievement quadrant.

On-entry assessments demonstrate strengths in student performance as well as effective evidence-based assessment and responsive planning processes. The staff are aware of the school’s performance profile and are working hard with a range of whole-school approaches and specific interventions to lift the achievement and progress of all students.

The school met the targets of maintaining a higher than State average attendance for non-Aboriginal, Aboriginal and total school population in 2013 and 2014. This is an excellent result that shows continual improvement over time, even when achieving to an already high standard.

The school’s target to reduce the percentage of students in risk categories has also been achieved with a decrease of students at moderate risk from 4.5% in 2012 to 3.8% in 2014 and a decrease of students in the severe risk category from 2.1% in 2012 to 1% in 2014.

An attendance target to decrease the number of students with less than 90% attendance due to families taking holidays during the school term was noted. Through interviews with a range of stakeholders, the reviewers found that this practice continues but is variable and is being addressed through ongoing dialogue between the school and families. The school’s average attendance continues to be slightly lower than the like-school average, indicating that family leave may be an ongoing issue.

Other attendance targets were aimed at implementation of school strategies to improve attendance, such as liaison with families through a school attendance officer, development of school strategies for students with less than 80% attendance and development of individual and group attendance plans for students with less than 90% attendance. The reviewers can verify that these strategies were in place.

Six targets were established to monitor and assess values in the school. Comments regarding the success of these initiatives appear later in this report.

The school is aware that targets continue to have a focus on both student achievement and progress, in both literacy and numeracy. To further clarify planning, the Principal and staff could consider writing strategies to achieve goals as milestones to assess progress in implementation rather than as targets. The addition of baseline data would also assist the school to assess longitudinal progress over time.

Discussion with the school leaders identified that, while the student performance identifies areas of progress, and in most cases overall performance is ‘as expected’, there is still 2015 data to consider in gauging the success of the Business Plan. The reviewers acknowledge the significant change over the past two years and the identified need to embed consistency of practice as being essential for improvement in student learning.
The staff are considering a period of consolidation regarding the establishment of whole-school programs and approaches and a renewed focus on monitoring the impact of strategies on student outcomes. The reviewers affirm this direction aimed at improving student learning.

As an area for improvement, the 2016–2018 Business Plan needs to include a reduced number of refined targets that are specific, measurable and meaningful to demonstrate improved student learning (achievement, progress, engagement).
School Performance—Quality of the Learning Environment

*How well has the school performed in creating an environment that promotes learning and well-being for all students and the attainment of the school vision?*

The 2013–2015 Business Plan has four targets related to the quality of the learning environment. The reviewers noted that the school has made considerable progress in all of these targets.

The first target is to achieve 90% positive responses to a *Kids Matter* survey. The school also sought to gain positive feedback from students and parents regarding the ethos of the school, including social interaction between staff and students, respect, understanding, appropriate expressions of feeling and high expectations for all students to achieve, valuing of diversity and positive relationships being promoted. The reviewers, in meetings with students, parents and staff, were able to gain an overview of the impact of the *Kids Matter* initiative in developing a positive and supportive learning environment.

The second target was to develop well embedded mechanisms such as student council and leadership groups to enable consultation and feedback. The reviewers saw ample evidence of this with a very progressive and empowered student council and extensive staff leadership opportunities to encourage consultation and feedback.

A third target related to explicit teaching of social and emotional skills as an essential part of the curriculum. This is being achieved through the school's implementation of the *Six Kinds of Best* values education program and the reviewers can verify that school data shows the positive impact on student behaviour.

The fourth target relates to evidence that parent education in relation to resiliency, values and safety has been addressed through information on protective behaviours and *Triple P* parent information sessions. The reviewers were provided with evidence of implementation of the strategies.

Over the past two years, the school has embarked on extensive cultural change in response to an audit conducted in 2013 using the Australian Council for Educational Research National School Improvement Tool. The staff have implemented a range of strategies in each of these areas and rated their progress ‘as expected’ in their recent school review. The review team endorses the cultural change evident in the school as an area of strength.
The progress made over the last two years is impressive and it is very evident that staff, students and parents are all actively engaged and accepting of the school's direction.

The school has created and embedded a culture that promotes student learning and attainment of the vision. The distributed leadership structure and processes have energised staff to engage in year-level, phase-of-learning, curriculum-area and whole-school planning for improvement. These different levels of planning are well coordinated by an executive team with all members displaying knowledge, understanding and passion for high standards and evidence-based improvement. Professional learning in 'Visible Learning for Teachers', along with peer coaching, classroom observations and reflection, has developed a culture of shared responsibility for quality teaching and learning. Performance management aligned to the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers has further embedded quality practices across the school.

The school has progressed well with the implementation of the Australian Curriculum. All teachers from Kindergarten to Year 6 are planning, teaching, assessing and reporting on students using the Australian Curriculum in all Phase One learning areas. Health and physical education, music and geography are being implemented with the support from curriculum teams, specialist teachers and the Deputy Principal responsible for curriculum. The school has engaged positively in a Broome Cluster initiative—Broome Australian Curriculum English (BACE), which attracts large numbers of teachers from five schools to voluntarily attend professional learning and work constructively together for better understanding and seamless alignment in implementation across the town.

The school is a Teacher Development School for mathematics, actively working with teachers across the regions to develop better teaching practice in mathematics. Teachers are keen to engage with and implement new strategies and approaches in their classes.

The school has created a very safe and inclusive culture based on respect and trust. Students interviewed endorsed this view, as did parents and staff. The review team observed stimulating classroom environments and the calm and professional approach of all staff resulting in high levels of student engagement. The school has a chaplain for one day each week and the Deputy Principal, new to the school in 2015, is leading planning and development of student services.
Strategies and resources have been deployed to effectively support student engagement and learning. Seven per cent of students are on individual education plans and 12% are on group education plans, many accessing small-group *Multi-Lit* intervention. This demonstrates a strong commitment to responsive planning to accommodate individual student needs. The regional Primary Extension and Challenge (PEAC) teacher is placed at the school and has developed a strong gifted and talented program for students across Broome. This program identified approximately 30 gifted and talented students who are at risk of not reaching their potential. The Principal and staff recognise that extension of targeted students is an area for future development. The reviewers affirm this direction.

The school and review team noted that the development of strong community partnerships has begun but is not as far progressed as internal reform. Parents and community members interviewed by the review team were satisfied with the school and reviewers noted the contribution of an active and supportive Parents and Citizens' Association. An annual parents' night in Term 3 is well attended and enables parents and community members to engage with students and teachers at the school.

The school promotes its programs, planning and achievements through its website where teachers are able to post classroom messages and newsletters to keep parents informed. Use of a smart phone application also assists prompt notification to parents regarding student absences. The staff have found it difficult to elicit feedback from parents through formal surveys and are seeking new ways to do this. Some parents interviewed expressed the need to have greater contact regarding their child's progress, particularly if they were experiencing difficulty.

Relationships with external agencies have included the Community Police Liaison officers engaging with students and an Aboriginal and Islander Education Officer working closely with Nyamba Buru Yawuru on initiatives to better engage Aboriginal students.
School Performance—Sustainability

*How well placed is the school to sustain and improve its performance into the next planning cycle?*

The school is developing sound self-review practices with whole-school processes being implemented in literacy and numeracy and staff engaged in targeted professional learning. In addition, a focus on the greater use of data and understanding of system and school-based information enables teachers to reflect on student performance and analyse data for classroom teaching effectiveness.

Through documentation and meetings with the Board Chair and members, evidence of the progress in the development of board practices was verified, particularly in its transition from School Council and in its relationship to the Cluster Board. Members were aware of the importance of their roles in endorsing strategic planning initiatives and in oversight of the performance of the school. The Board has increased the number of meetings from four to eight per year to provide members with greater opportunities to understand their new responsibilities and accountabilities. The school leadership team has provided presentations to members to support their knowledge of the Business Plan, achievement of milestones and student performance in NAPLAN testing. The Board has also conducted surveys and communicated to parents through newsletters to inform, educate and seek feedback on its role in supporting the provision of a quality education. The reviewers noted the developmental progress being made by the Board in understanding its responsibilities. This has been in the context of three changes of principal during the period of the current DPA and Business Plan and significant student enrolment shifts.

The reviewers were able to engage productively with the leadership team during the course of the review and were able to verify the claims of positive interaction between team members which included the Principal, two deputy principals and the Registrar. In addition, curriculum team leaders of priority and focus areas presented as cohesive teams sharing responsibility for supporting staff in whole-school approaches. This was affirmed in discussions with staff who felt highly supported by their leaders.
The school's vision of 'Working Together' is reflected in its organisation and planning for effective self-review and in enhancing the capacity of a professional staff. This is evident through the development of teams, the introduction of peer coaching and performance management aligned to the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers.

The school leadership team provided evidence to the reviewers that financial resource management was effective with extensive planning in place to ensure targeted expenditure on school priorities. The role of the Registrar and the endorsement of the Board were integral to this process. The leadership team reported that sufficient human, physical and financial resources were available to sustain current programs and support future initiatives. In managing human resources, the Workforce Plan takes into account external, internal and local factors in planning to meet workforce requirements in classroom, specialist and priority program areas. The school continues to plan for transiency, seasonal enrolments and the ongoing transition of students to the newly opened Broome North Primary School. In addition, the school has engaged with the State School Teachers' Union of WA to ensure that staff members have an understanding of redeployment processes associated with the changing context of the school.

The school's focus on instructional leadership with curriculum leaders supporting staff development to ensure the principles of teaching, learning and assessment are embedded in classroom practice, is affirmed. The Principal and staff have been engaged in making significant progress in establishing a leadership model enabling staff to have greater opportunities and ownership in setting directions for school planning and in establishing appropriate targets for improved student learning. The implementation of trimester planning, together with a focus on evidence-based review and development has increased collaborative planning, tightened accountability and increased flexibility to adapt plans to changing needs.

Reviewers were able to verify, through documentation and extensive meetings with team leaders, staff and targeted meetings with school leaders on 'Future Directions', the commitment being made and actions being taken in developing whole-school practice in school planning.
School and Cluster Performance

Has the cluster met its intended purpose and supported improved student learning?

The Broome Cluster of Independent Public Schools is framed around the concept of ‘five schools, one K–12 community’ with the intent of maintaining and strengthening the strongest possible public education system in Broome and the Kimberley. This was initially driven by the Cluster Business Plan (2013–2015) aimed at improving collective opportunities for intellectual, social, physical, creative and experimental learning through shared professional development, high-quality teaching and strong pastoral care relationships within and across each of the schools.

With changes in Principal and Board Chair in some of the schools, and the inclusion of a new school in 2015, a re-visioning process resulted in a review of planning for the cluster and a shift from the Business Plan model to a ‘framework’ model, which is less prescriptive while maintaining the four priorities of:

- shared excellence
- a seamless transition from K to 12
- retention of students and families in Broome
- the maintenance of a safe and inclusive community.

Cluster documents, including agendas and minutes of meetings, demonstrate a professional approach to organisation of the cluster and a commitment to the collective success of Broome public schools through the articulation of common expectations and joint pursuits. Although the cluster was unable to quantify the extent of the benefits claimed, indicators of success to date include:

- organisation and funding of professional learning
- sharing of expertise
- marketing of Broome public schools
- transition of students with disability from primary to secondary schooling
- moderation procedures and retention of enrolments
- transition to the secondary school by mainstream students.
The reviewers acknowledge the advantages of increased flexibility of the ‘framework’ model for schools, but also note the lack of associated strategies, measurable milestones or targets has the potential to limit the cluster’s ability to monitor progress and determine value for joint resource commitments.

The Cluster Chairperson reported that a process to monitor the effectiveness of the Cluster Board through a brief survey had been implemented. The implications of the analysis of this information for cluster planning were not enunciated.

As an area for improvement, it is recommended the Board of the Broome Cluster of Independent Public Schools revisits its protocols, values and framework for joint planning in 2015 and beyond to ensure all schools are cognisant of expectations, are in agreement on joint pursuits and have measures that will enable it to determine progress made and the value returned for all schools on joint resource commitments.

The cluster is acknowledged by the Principal and staff at Roebuck Primary School as providing considerable benefits in supporting improved student learning. These include:

- structures that enable and maintain professional collaboration for staff, such as the Broome Australian Curriculum English (BACE) network
- identification of student health issues and sharing of resources
- promotion of Yawuru language and cultural awareness
- provision of extended shared services particularly for ‘students at risk’ with health therapy and special educational needs support
- building the positive image of public education with Broome families
- supporting transition of students, with particular emphasis on those with special educational needs.

In addition, the Board Chair has participated as a member of the Broome Cluster Board to better understand and promote the educational benefits of this collaboration between schools, with particular reference to Roebuck Primary School.

Leadership at the school and board level at Roebuck Primary School indicated they were positive about the future of the cluster and were keen to see further educational options developed across Broome schools in line with meeting the Department of Education’s strategic directions.
While there was acknowledgement that the cluster had broken down many of the barriers between primary and secondary education, the need to have a focus on benefits for all schools and the capacity to maintain options about school engagement in projects were considered to be important outcomes for the future.
Conclusion

Roebuck Primary School has been through a period of instability with leadership change, enrolment variability and staff change that impacted on the development of strategies to improve student learning. Since 2013, leadership stability and greater staff consultation and engagement in school review processes have established a strong foundation for the development of teaching practice and a focus on understanding improvement strategies to enhance academic performance.

The school's focus on instructional leadership with a distributed curriculum leadership model, and a focus on staff development of instructional strategies and ownership of the review process, are positive steps forward in improving student learning. The developing practice of evidence-based decision-making and collaborative planning along with greater accountability awareness are also contributing to improved school practice.

The development of the Board in providing oversight and support for the school's directions is a feature of the overall improvement agenda. Along with the greater stability and professionalism of staff, Roebuck Primary School is well placed for future success.
Commendations

The following areas are commended:

- the actions taken by school leadership with staff to establish a culture of shared responsibility for teaching and learning through quality professional learning, reflection, mentoring and coaching opportunities associated with performance management
- the focus on whole-school approaches and evidence-based research and program development that has led to extensive cultural change in the school over the past two years
- the Principal and staff for the establishment of a safe and inclusive learning environment that provides a challenging curriculum to meet student needs
- the Principal, deputy principals and Registrar for the development of a leadership team that provided clear direction to staff through a time of considerable change, and has supported staff to make the changes necessary to ensure that there is a whole-school focus on teaching for improved student learning
- the development of a distributed curriculum leadership model to empower staff to plan and implement teaching and learning that meets the diverse needs of students.

Areas for Improvement

The following areas for improvement are identified:

- the inclusion in the 2016–2018 Business Plan of a reduced number of refined targets that are specific, measurable and meaningful to demonstrate improved student learning (achievement, progress, engagement)
- the Board of the Broome Cluster of Independent Schools revisit its protocols, values and framework for joint planning in 2015 and beyond, to ensure all schools are cognisant of expectations, are in agreement on joint pursuits and have measures that will enable it to determine progress made.
Declaration

We, the undersigned, hereby confirm that the information provided in this findings document is to the best of our knowledge true and correct and is based on the verification of the evidence provided by Roebuck Primary School as part of the Department of Education Services’ independent review process. The Principal and Board Chair have had an opportunity to comment on any matters of fact contained within this document.

4 September 2015
Date

Mrs Kerri Usher, Lead Reviewer

Ms Janine Milton, Reviewer

4 September 2015
Date

Mr Richard Strickland, Director General, Department of Education Services

8/9/15
Date