



Government of **Western Australia**  
Department of **Education**

# Canning Vale College

## 2018 Review Findings



Independent Public School Review

## Disclaimer

This document reports the findings of the review of Canning Vale College.

The Department of Education does not endorse any commercial organisation, product or service mentioned in this report.

The Department of Education can only guarantee the authenticity of original documents. This document is uncontrolled once printed.

*To help people with disabilities obtain access to information, this document can be provided in alternative format on request. Please contact [jpsreview@des.wa.gov.au](mailto:jpsreview@des.wa.gov.au) with specific requests or telephone 08 9441 1900.*

## School and Review Details

<b>Principal:</b>	Mr Paul Bottcher
<b>Board Chair:</b>	Mr David Goode
<b>School Address:</b>	26 Dumbarton Road, Canning Vale WA 6155
<b>Number of Students:</b>	1582
<b>ICSEA<sup>1</sup></b>	1028
<b>Reviewers:</b>	Mr Bill Mann (Lead) Ms Joy Shepherd
<b>Review Dates:</b>	20 and 21 February 2018

## 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.

---

<sup>1</sup> 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://docs.acara.edu.au/resources/About\\_icsea\\_2014.pdf](http://docs.acara.edu.au/resources/About_icsea_2014.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)?*

Canning Vale College, located 23 km south of the Perth CBD, was established in 2004 and gained IPS status in 2015. The rapid growth of the suburb and the move of Year 7 to secondary school has resulted in increases in enrolments. Currently, 1582 students attend the college and this is expected to plateau at around 1500 as new schools in neighbouring areas become fully developed. As well as the large increase in teaching staff necessitated by increased enrolments, there have been considerable changes in the leadership team in the last two years. These are significant factors which have an impact on college performance.

A high percentage of students have English as their second language, reflecting the multicultural population.

The college also attracts a high proportion of students requiring learning support, including students with autism, because of the successful intervention programs it has developed. Also, a wide range of specialist and co-curricular programs are offered to students.

## Findings

- The Business Plan 2015–17 outlines three shared beliefs and understandings – Thinking, Learning and Caring – followed by a vision statement describing what the college will look like by the end of 2017. The bulk of the business plan details the focus areas, strategies and targets by which the vision will be realised.
- The four focus areas are high quality teaching and learning; a safe, positive and inclusive environment; high quality leadership; and effective internal and external relationships. These focus areas relate to the principal's responsibilities as agreed in the DPA, thus ensuring that these responsibilities are embedded in the business plan.
- A series of succinct and practical strategies provide college staff with the means to improve the college's performance in each of the focus areas. The strategies reflect a knowledge of research-based best practice and are responsive to the college's context, including specific student cohorts.

- To monitor progress, performance targets are expressed using a three-level scale. These detail improvement at the lowest, expected and aspirational levels. The targets are easily measurable using readily available data and where relevant, include comparisons with like-schools and Western Australian public schools.
- Progress towards the business plan targets is reviewed twice yearly by staff and presented to the board for discussion and endorsement.
- It is evident in discussions with staff that they are clear about the direction the college is taking to improve student outcomes. Operational plans at both a whole-school and departmental level are informed by the business plan.
- The 2015 and 2016 annual reports provide a comprehensive summary of progress towards the business plan targets. These are made available to the college community via the website.

### **Areas of strength**

- Clarity and measurability of the business plan targets.
- Strong links between the DPA, business plan and operational plan.

## Teaching and Learning

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

### Findings

- Student performance across Years 7–9, as measured by National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) data, has not shown any improvement during the period of the current business plan. Comparisons with like-schools indicates students are achieving at levels lower than expected. While Year 7 in 2015 were generally at or above like-school achievement, by Year 9 in 2017 their achievement had dropped to below like-school data. Comparative (with like-schools) data that considered value-adding between Year 7 and Year 9 showed students generally achieved at lower levels and made less progress.
- With the exception of English, teacher judgements have been consistently sound and align well with NAPLAN data.
- The college has a considerable number of students requiring specific educational interventions. The Learning Enrichment and Active Partnerships (LEAP) education support program (45 students), the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) program for autistic students (65 students), and English as an additional language or dialect (EAL/D) assistance (29 students) combined provide a significant intervention strategy. With a large team of education assistants (EAs) and teachers, these students are tracked effectively through to Year 12, with appropriate curriculum offerings.
- The senior school (Years 10–12) data has shown improvement across the current business cycle. Year 12 results for 2017 include a 99% attainment rate, an improved median Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank (ATAR) (now 78.48, up from 70.7 in 2016), 90% achieving a Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) and 72% enrolled in one or more certificate courses. The WACE result mirrors a drop across schools in Western Australia, with the Online Literacy and Numeracy Assessment (OLNA) requirements proving too challenging for some students.
- A business plan target was to increase the number of students taking an ATAR pathway, based on Year 9 NAPLAN Band 8–10 achievement. While this has not been achieved in 2017 (but was surpassed in 2015 and 2016), the college believes better student counselling processes influenced student choices and impacted positively on the median ATAR score.

- The college employs a number of strategies to encourage better student engagement and achievement. The 'A+' and extension classes in lower school, Intervention Strategies and Support for Literacy and Numeracy Difficulties in Schools program for lower achieving students, regular communications with parents through Connect and parent nights, and a focus on catering for individual students' needs effectively raise expectations around building success at school.
- In senior school, ongoing student counselling regarding progress towards goal attainment, close tracking and support for students yet to satisfy OLN requirements and establishing the 90+ group for ATAR students all help students to realise their potential.
- The college has adopted a number of strategies to engage teachers in building collaborative practices. Developing professional learning communities across learning area teams, using Tactical Teaching to build instructional competencies, developing instructional protocols for use by all staff and involving staff in instructional rounds have been implemented to improve teaching practices across the college.
- The move in 2013 towards developing a comprehensive senior secondary school model, with teachers aligned closely with their learning areas, has had a significant positive impact on teaching and learning at the college. Staff and parents acknowledge the importance of this change in building better educational rigour and enhancing the college's reputation in the community.
- Development through performance management is embedded practice at the college. Built around the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers and linked directly to the college business plan targets and priorities, all staff are engaged with performance management that is linked to professional learning opportunities. Staff reported their support for both the application and outcomes of this work.
- Evidence-based curriculum planning and instructional improvements are developing strategies at the college. The administration team acknowledged there is work to be done in this key area of college improvement. A reconfiguration of the administration team to establish curriculum and pedagogic leadership within the team is a key step in this process.
- The focus at the college on improving teaching and learning, particularly across the lower school years, is an emerging priority. Sustainability of this work will be dependent on the capacity of the curriculum leadership team to provide professional learning support across the college teaching team.



**Area of strength**

- Enthusiastic and committed administration, teaching and support staff who are strongly supportive of the college's ethos and culture and engaged with its improvement agenda.

**Areas for improvement**

- Build assessment literacy, particularly within the learning area leadership team, that will then inform improvements in curriculum planning and delivery and instructional practices.
- Improve data interrogation and implement necessary teaching and learning programs to ensure student progress across Years 7–9 reaches comparable like-school levels.

## Student Performance Monitoring

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

### Findings

- Twice yearly the business plan targets guide a very thorough process of rigorous self-review. This information is used to inform planning for improvement, and to make any necessary adjustments to the business plan. The college board and staff are kept fully informed in relation to this work.
- For the purpose of this review the college undertook a thorough analysis of the DPA priorities to ensure compliance with all aspects of this document. This confirmed there was strong college alignment with the requirements prescribed in the DPA.
- This college self-review exercise, largely undertaken by the college leadership team, is thorough and comprehensive. While the information is widely distributed across the college, the impact of this data is limited to whole-college initiatives and not felt at the classroom level.
- There was some evidence that teachers use an evidence-based approach to their curriculum planning and delivery, but this is not established practice across the college, particularly in Years 7–9. Developing links with the local primary schools has enhanced data collection on the incoming Year 7 students. The use of Progressive Achievement Tests in Year 7, designed to provide more immediate data regarding student achievement levels, is developing. This work will enhance the college's capacity to identify student strengths, areas of weakness and implement intervention strategies to address areas of concern for individual students.
- In senior school a more prescriptive curriculum and regular assessment points has developed a more rigorous approach by teachers towards close monitoring of student achievement and presenting regular and reliable feedback.
- The annual report is concise yet comprehensive, with a clear emphasis on reporting against the targets prescribed in the business plan. Other aspects of the school's programs and priorities are also included in the report, which is tabled at a board meeting and readily available for community perusal.

- As the college curriculum leadership team develops their professional competencies in monitoring and evaluating student performance, and using this information to improve curriculum planning and delivery, sustainability in improved student performance in Years 7–9 will emerge.

### **Area of strength**

- The college review practices in relation to the business plan targets are excellent.

### **Area for improvement**

- Improve data analysis of student performance in the lower school, and implement effective curriculum and instructional leadership to build the professional competencies of teachers to deliver improved student outcomes.

## Program Delivery

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

### Findings

- The college delivers programs designed to meet the needs of all students in accordance with legislative requirements. The Western Australian Curriculum and Assessment Outline is audited by associate principals and heads of learning area.
- Of particular note are the programs and strategies used to cater for the individual needs of students. The Canning Vale College Good Practice Teaching Model is a blueprint for maximising learning and progress for all students. Special Education Needs (SEN) students in six classes from Year 7 to Year 12 are involved in the LEAP program. Students with autism and some SEN students are supported in mainstream by an experienced team of EAs. Specialist English classes for EAL/D students are provided in Year 7 and Year 8 as well as for those completing Year 11 and Year 12 EAL/D courses. The college runs a wide range of vocational education and training (VET) and ATAR subjects to cater for individual students' interests and abilities.
- There are comprehensive safety and welfare policies for students both on-campus and off-site, including comprehensive policies and procedures for the large numbers of VET and Workplace Learning students who engage in off-site learning.
- A culture of care and wellbeing for all students is evident and confirmed in discussions with students, staff and parents. Staff understand their roles and responsibilities in developing and maintaining a child-safe environment. Professional learning for staff has included student social and emotional wellbeing and protective behaviours. There is a well-established whole-school Positive Behaviour Support framework and documented classroom strategies for creating a positive and supportive environment. Transition protocols have been developed to ease the move from primary to secondary school. A variety of pastoral care programs such as Drumbeat and Aussie Optimism are implemented as appropriate.
- Embedded and well-documented practices ensure the efficient day-to-day operations of the college and these practices are effectively supported by software such as SEQTA and Connect. Student Services, Autism and Special

Education Needs and LEAP staff use WhatsApp for urgent internal communication.

- Well-documented and embedded policies and procedures give reviewers confidence in the sustainability of program delivery practices.

### **Area of strength**

- The breadth of educational programs designed to meet the needs of all students.

## 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

- The college has a documented self-review and planning cycle which examines student achievement and college operations in relation to business plan targets. Depending on availability, data is assessed twice yearly or annually by staff at a whole-school and learning area level. Strategies are then developed or refined to improve standards. These are integrated into learning area plans and inform staff professional learning. Business plan targets are modified where appropriate. Resourcing implications are considered and fed into the budget cycle. The executive collates the results and reports to the board against the DPA and the business plan each semester.
- A reconfiguring of the administration team to establish curriculum and pedagogic leadership is under discussion. This will enable the more efficient deployment of senior staff resources as the college looks to improve student outcomes, particularly in the lower secondary years.
- College financial planning is effectively managed through a consultative budgeting cycle which is responsive to the resource implications of the twice-yearly reviews. Early in Term 4 a draft budget is discussed by the finance committee before being considered and endorsed by the board.
- Throughout the year, finances are closely monitored at all levels in the college. The manager corporate services presents a finance report at each board meeting which is discussed and then endorsed by the board.
- Annual reports inform the college community of progress towards the business and operational plan targets. Summaries of financial statements are included in the reports.
- Resourcing decisions reflect identified student need. For example, the high number of SEN students and students with autism accounts for the provision of 43 EAs. Successful strategies to improve student attendance included the deployment of two school officers to follow up on absences and to work with families, and the use of an SMS program to alert families to absences early in the day.

- Forward planning in information and communications technology (ICT) included the decision to introduce a bring your own iPad program beginning with Year 7.
- The workforce plan identifies several contextual issues which have staffing implications and the workforce planning priorities for 2018–20 are evidence that college leaders have realistic plans to deal with the issues.
- The reviewers have confidence in the sustainability of resourcing and support.

### **Areas of strength**

- Strong financial management.
- The college review and assessment cycle.
- The strategies to achieve the workforce priorities.

### **Area for improvement**

- Improve distribution of roles and responsibilities within the executive.

## School Board

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

### Findings

- The board is an effective and coherent group that is representative of the college community and fulfils legal and regulatory membership requirements. Members include staff, student, parent and community representatives.
- Board members clearly understand their roles and functions and fulfil these expectations appropriately.
- The current board chair and most members were not participants in the original development of the DPA and business plan. However, they are well aware of the business plan and receive regular reports in relation to the targets in this plan. There is currently considerable engagement with the development of the next business plan.
- Meetings are held at least four times per year with a set agenda and established protocols that facilitate robust discussion across the membership. Meetings with board members confirmed the high level of engagement with the college's reporting against business plan targets as part of the performance review cycle.
- Presentation is made at each board meeting of the college's financial status and any issues that may arise in this context.
- The board is aware of the current workforce plan, was involved in the selection of the new principal and the endorsement of a new associate principal to his position.
- The board membership is currently experiencing a renewal phase, with the intention of securing board members who will add specific knowledge and skills to the current team. This work will be a key task as the next business plan is developed and implemented.
- The board has committed to a program of college promotion both within the local community and beyond. The board readily acknowledges that enhancing the reputation of the college will encourage local primary school students to enrol, and in particular this work is targeted to capture those high-performing students who currently move out-of-area to nearby selective schools.



**Area of strength**

- The commitment and enthusiasm of the board, which ensure it is well placed to make important contributions to the next business plan.

### Conclusion

Canning Vale College has experienced considerable renewal over the last five years. A reconfiguration of the college's organisational structure in 2013 to a more traditional senior secondary school model, with staff working within their learning area contexts and experiencing curriculum leadership and mentoring support has strengthened pedagogy and curriculum rigour.

The move to IPS status in 2015 helped the college to reinvigorate its planning processes and develop better ways to analyse data and evaluate progress towards its business plan targets.

The board is very supportive of the college's improvement plans and teachers, parents and students are enthusiastic contributors to this work. The college administration team is also experiencing significant change after a period of disruption. The new team are well aware of the challenges ahead but are also aware of the opportunities presented to them to meet these challenges.

The next business plan can draw on the successful implementation and target evaluation of the current plan and identify the steps necessary to ensure the college continues to improve.

## 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 Canning Vale College, true and correct.

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



Mr Bill Mann, Lead Reviewer

13 March 2018

Date



Ms Joy Shepherd, Reviewer

15 March 2018

Date



Mr Ken Perris, Director,  
Independent Public School Review

15 March 2018

Date