Comet Bay Primary School

2012

Independent Review Findings
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Disclaimer

This document has been based on the findings of the independent reviewers' 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 Minister for Education, the Director General of Education, the Principal and the Board Chair.

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School and Review Details

Principal: Mr Matt Osborne
Board Chair: Mr Martin Turner
School Location: Miltona Drive, Secret Harbour WA 6173
School Classification: Level 6 Primary
Number of Students: 1025 (at the time of the Review Visit)
Independent Reviewers: Mr Graham Rixon and Mr Kevin Pilkington
Review Dates: Self-review presentation: 18 September 2012
Review visits: 22 and 23 October 2012

1. About the Independent Review

The purpose of the independent review of Comet Bay Primary School is to provide an assurance to the Minister for Education, the Director General of Education and the school community 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 improved the standards of student learning (achievement, progress and engagement) for all students
- how well the school has created an environment that promotes student learning
- how well the school is placed to sustain and improve its performance.

The school has been required, under the DPA, to undertake regular self-assessment. The outcomes of these assessments formed the basis for the school self-review which was presented to the reviewers for verification at the commencement of the independent review.

Prior to the presentation of the school's self-review, reviewers were provided with information on the school's educational achievements, its processes and its student performance data from a number of sources which include, but are not limited to:

- the MySchool™ website
- the Department of Education School Performance Monitoring System
- Schools Online reports.
The reviewers visited the school for a half-day presentation of the school’s self-review by the Principal, the Board Chair and other key stakeholders chosen by the school. Subsequently the reviewers analysed the evidence presented in the school’s self-review documentation and developed lines of enquiry where further verification was required.

An agenda for a two-day review visit was then negotiated with the school to enable the gathering of further evidence to clarify or confirm the claims made in the school self-review. During these two days the reviewers sourced information and evidence to support the school self-review claims through observation and discussion with teaching and non-teaching staff, board members, parents, students and the school leadership team.

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

This document reports on the findings of the independent review.
2. Summary

Since its establishment in 2007 Comet Bay Primary School has experienced significant growth. During this period the school has developed an impressive range of programs and teaching strategies to support its vision and expectations for all students. Despite the rapid growth in student numbers the school has been able to manage a major building program, including the Early Childhood Annex, without disrupting the quality of student learning.

The proactive manner in which the education of students at educational risk (SAER) has been managed and the attention paid to developing an inclusive school climate that values and seeks the best outcomes for all students is evident to teachers, students and parents alike.

The school has implemented a curriculum that challenges, engages and improves student learning. It is able to gauge its success through a strong self-review culture that monitors a range of well thought-out strategies to ensure improved student achievement, progress and engagement. The 2013 Business Plan, it is expected, will reflect improved target setting, monitoring and flexibility in addressing the key focus areas that the school has identified through its review processes.

The school has developed a quality learning environment with a number of strategies and actions, including multi-age grouping, that are socially inclusive and engage students in learning while providing an atmosphere that fosters care and wellbeing.

The school has implemented practices and strategies that place it in a sound position to sustain its current level of performance and improve student learning.

Commendations:

- The provision of a safe, caring and nurturing environment for all children.
- The establishment of teaching teams and curriculum leaders with the focus on improving outcomes in literacy and numeracy.
- The significant work of the Principal in compiling the rich database of student information for staff to analyse.
- The programs in place to support student learning.
- The evidence gathered from NAPLAN, ACER, internal school assessment and a ‘rich’ database of information developed by the Principal and its interrogation by teachers and the Board.
- Developing and embedding a vision for learning based on high expectations, effective pastoral care, responding to individual differences, integrating
technology in learning and developing partnerships between the staff, students, parents and the community.

- The very specific focus the school places on achieving success for all students through effective targeting of strategies and resources.
- The development of a quality learning environment with strategies and actions that are socially inclusive and engage students in learning while providing an atmosphere that fosters care and wellbeing.
- The Principal's strong focus on distributed leadership particularly through the deputies and team leaders.

Affirmations:

- The Board Chair's endeavours to enhance the role and function of the School Board through self-assessment of the Board's operations, time and duration of meetings and improved communication to the School community.
- That as a part of the self-review cycle, the Board intends to review its own performance on a regular basis against the expectations contained in the DPA.
- The school's interrogation of the data and the resultant strategies being implemented to improve outcomes, including a collaborative approach, team teaching and explicit instruction.
- The practice of self-reflection based on data related to student performance, attendance and behaviour.
- The planning for sustainability of the provision of strategies to improve pedagogy.
- The identification by teaching teams that the original targets were too challenging and need to be revised to reflect challenging but achievable steps toward identified targets.
- The strategies being employed to support the implementation of the Australian Curriculum.
- The range of programs and strategies deployed to engage parents and the community with the aim of building relationships between parents and the school.
- The early indications of collaborative planning and early intervention strategies between Comet Bay Primary School and the off-site Early Childhood Annex to ensure positive outcomes for students in transition to the Primary School.
Recommendations:

- That board members undertake the training provided by the Department of Education specifically for IPS school boards.
- That 'like' school comparative data be included in the school's data analysis.
- That staff be consulted in developing the targets of the new Business Plan and that the new targets are clear, challenging, measurable and achievable.
3. School Context

Comet Bay Primary School, a Level 6 Independent Public School (IPS) opened in 2007 with approximately 420 students, as part of the South Metropolitan Education District. Students from Pre-Primary to Year 7 are located at Miltona Drive, Secret Harbour. The Early Childhood Annex is located at Surf Drive, Anstey Park (two kilometres from the main campus) for Kindergarten and Child Care students.

The school has experienced rapid growth in student enrolments over the years with a current enrolment figure of 1028 students. Approximately 38% of the school’s students are from the United Kingdom, with a significant number from South Africa and New Zealand. In addition, there are fly-in-fly-out (FIFO) families living in the area. The school community has a close relationship with the Defence Force with the parents of many students based at Garden Island.

Numbers are expected to grow and with an enrolment of 1080 students expected in the next few years it is probable that the school will be overcrowded in 2014. However it is projected that the transition of Year 7 students to secondary school in 2015 will alleviate the pressure slightly. The school administration and the Board have indicated the intent to review possible models to assist in the smooth transfer of Year 7 to secondary schooling in 2015.

Comet Bay Primary School was selected as an IPS in the first round of schools that applied to be part of this initiative. The school undertook minimal consultation and was required to have its Business Plan submitted within a very short time frame. As a result, the Principal and interim Board signed off on a Business Plan that had minimal input from staff and the wider school community. The Business Plan is acknowledged by the Principal as lacking specificity in the setting of targets. The school has developed operational plans that more clearly identify areas to be addressed and include more specific targets.

Being a recently established school the infrastructure is appropriate for the delivery of teaching and learning programs, with newly constructed early years teaching areas and additional classrooms providing facilities of a high standard. The student enrolment pressure that will be maintained for the next few years means a significant number of transportable classrooms will remain until such time as the enrolment stabilises. A new feature of the school is the addition of the State Government funded Early Childhood Annex on a nearby site – this has reduced the pressure of student numbers on the main campus. The Annex commenced in 2012 offering Kindergarten and early years programs.
Comet Bay Primary School

In a growth environment, teachers are involved in dealing with the specific needs of new students on a regular basis and new staff are regularly being appointed and inducted into the school. Since its inception, the school has used merit selection to provide a workforce that meets student needs, including the appointment of a psychologist, chaplain and support staff.

Comet Bay Primary School provides an excellent range of educational experiences and opportunities for its students and the school community. The school vision to be a place of excellence is supported by the breadth of academic and inclusive programs developed to ensure that student learning, high standards and social and emotional resilience are key indicators of the success of the school. Vision statements are clearly embedded in the school’s documentation, delivery of programs and the views expressed by students, staff and parents. The school motto: ‘Growing Together’ represents the emphasis placed on the partnership between school and home. There is a very strong focus among the school community on doing things ‘the Comet Bay way’.

Partnerships have been developed with external groups that add value to the school, for example: a teacher training and research initiative with Edith Cowan University; the Stephanie Alexander Foundation partnership (‘Kitchen Garden’), and the provision of student teachers on practice by Murdoch University.

The Comet Bay Primary School Council transitioned smoothly to the School Board when it became an IPS. The Board acknowledges that it is still in a development phase and is focusing on implementing operations and understanding its functions and accountability role as set out in the DPA. The reviewers affirm the Board Chair’s endeavours to enhance the role and function of the Board through a range of strategies including self-assessment of the Board’s operations, time and duration of meetings and improved communication to the School community. Membership of the Board includes elected parent and staff representatives together with external community representation. There is a very open and mutually trusting relationship between the Principal and the Board Chair and a clear distinction between the role of the Board and the management of the school.

While some Board members have undertaken training in the role and function of School Boards with the Department of Education the reviewers recommend that training for all board members would be of value.

The reviewers affirm the challenging nature of a school undergoing rapid growth and the added demands of a diverse student population and commend the school for providing a safe, caring and nurturing environment for all children.
4a. **School Performance - Student Learning**

Comet Bay Primary School has developed a sound curriculum with a strong focus on improving learning, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Thorough analysis of achievement and progress by cohort, groups and individual students is evident. The school has been detailed in its assessment of how students are achieving and has initiated appropriate strategies to improve educational outcomes for all students. Literacy and numeracy are a focus in all classrooms from Kindergarten to Year 7.

Priorities identified in the Business Plan provide guidance for the teaching and learning occurring in the school and the allocation of resources to support the achievement of identified targets. The Business Plan identifies three priorities with associated targets and strategies:

- Curriculum Strategic Targets with priority areas being Literacy, Numeracy and an inclusive teaching and learning environment
- Ethos Strategic Goals
- Partnership Strategic Goals.

Teaching teams have been established in Early Childhood Education, Middle and Senior Primary and team leaders appointed. This has been a key strategy in supporting staff to achieve a student-focused emphasis, through a collaborative approach toward achieving targets through explicit teaching. The appointment of two specialist teachers as literacy and numeracy coaches provides guidance and support to teaching staff. Data provided based on the 2010 to 2012 NAPLAN results indicate the school is having mixed success in achieving its targets. All targets relate to measuring improvement against 2010 NAPLAN results, however, as the school has nearly doubled in size since 2010 the context is different. Measures of success relate to reducing the percentage of students below national minimum standards in reading and numeracy and increasing the percentage of students in the top 20% sectile. The 2012 results indicate limited success in achieving these targets, however, progressive gains of cohorts from 2010-2012 indicate that students are progressing at a similar rate to or better than state gain. The reviewers affirm the school's interrogation of the data and the resultant strategies implemented to improve outcomes. The school is commended on the establishment of teaching teams and curriculum leaders with the focus on improving outcomes in literacy and numeracy.

The reviewers note that the targets are lacking in specificity and consider only NAPLAN data. The school developed these targets concurrently with the required targets to meet National Partnerships funding and the promise of increased reward
funding if targets were achieved. The reviewers acknowledge that the operational plan details more specific analysis of student achievement and that it is reviewed annually. NAPLAN is also annual but the school monitoring is continual and focused. A comprehensive data base on each student’s academic performance has been developed by the school. Results of each student’s performance in regular tests and measurements are recorded. Intentional teaching of skills in reading (Running Records, Sight Words, Guided Reading) and numeracy (Maths Challenge) underpin a focus on all students improving. The school demonstrated rigorous analysis of data that was able to identify progress of individual students, groups of students and whole cohorts. Identified weakness and areas of strength resulted in appropriate strategies being developed and implemented to address them. The development of individual education plans for 224 students (literacy 204 and numeracy 130) is evidence that the school is focused on improving every student’s academic performance. Teacher teams interrogate the data. Through this collegial process of disciplined dialogue, focus is given to school-based targets and grounds the discussion in accountable outcomes for students.

Running Reading records and some areas of numeracy revealed that teachers were not well skilled in the teaching of literacy and numeracy. These weaknesses have been targeted in professional learning provided by the literacy and numeracy coaches. The school has a focus group for both numeracy and literacy. Each learning team has one representative on each of the focus groups to act as envoy to lead discussion in the teams on agreed whole of school strategies. The process is one of modelling and providing support and guidance to teachers. For example writing has been a focus over a long period of time. By building teacher knowledge through professional learning the school has been able to improve teacher quality.

The Principal and Board Chair confirmed that the targets as stated in the Business Plan have not been amended over the three years as they are keen to focus on assessing the growth of Comet Bay Primary School over the period intended to achieve the targets. This decision was made on the premise that, if targets are continually modified or adjusted, then progress over time cannot be measured.

The school has worked hard to achieve the targets of the Business Plan in for numeracy and literacy. Rigorous examination of the data and ongoing regular discussion and planning in the teaching teams has resulted in the acknowledgement that the original targets were too challenging and in need of revision. The 2012 results confirm this finding. Revised targets in the next Business Plan will reflect further improvement in this area. The reviewers affirm that the targets relating to student performance will be revised and reflect challenging but achievable steps toward identified targets.
Underpinning the culture of the school is the value system of the Tribes program. Incorporated in this philosophy is the belief in every individual's right to respect and the opportunity to learn to potential. Numerous specialist programs support student learning in Art and Physical Education (Pre-Primary-Year 7), Science (Pre-Primary to Year 3), and Music (Years 4-7). The school has established a safe and supportive learning environment in which a balanced curriculum reflecting all eight learning areas of the Western Australian Curriculum is delivered. The school has established sound foundations for the implementation of the Australian Curriculum. There are indicators of training and planning being coordinated by strong curriculum leadership provided by team leaders. Detailed scope and sequencing, led by team leaders in phases of schooling, demonstrated advanced engagement with the introduction of the Australian Curriculum across all years. Evidence of the phased implementation of the Australian Curriculum was presented to the reviewers, which was verified through discussion with curriculum leaders, teachers, classroom visitation and viewing relevant documentation. The reviewers affirm the strategies being employed to support the implementation of the Australian Curriculum.

The student data tracking system developed by the Principal is exceptional, enabling the school to identify performance across the curriculum of individual, groups and whole cohorts of students. Detailed analysis and discussion around this data enables the teachers to put in place appropriate strategies to support students and improve learning outcomes. Currently 224 students are on individual education plans (IEPs) (Literacy 204 and Numeracy 130) and their performance is closely monitored. Students with IEPs are across the spectrum of student performance, with each receiving appropriate intervention. The reviewers were able to observe team meetings and view IEPs that confirm the development of this strategy. Effective use of education assistants, continual professional learning opportunities for staff and a clear focus on whole of school approaches to literacy and numeracy have resulted in improved teaching and learning. Although not evident when measured purely against NAPLAN data, the school is able to demonstrate improvement in literacy and numeracy when data gathered by continual class assessment and teacher judgement is considered. The school is commended on the strategies developed to improve outcomes for individual, groups and cohorts of students.

The Principal and senior leadership of Comet Bay Primary School identified the need for a stronger school focus on supporting teachers to continually improve pedagogical strategies in the teaching of reading and numeracy. In response, the school provided targeted professional learning in the following areas with the intent to improve the quality of teaching at Comet Bay Primary School:
• guided reading
• grammar as part of the Australian Curriculum
• participation in the Principal as Literacy Leaders project
• Pathways to Spelling Success
• moderation in writing assessment
• Running Records
• Intentional teaching techniques.

Teaching staff attend weekly meetings after school to discuss curriculum matters. Curriculum leaders and team leaders meet fortnightly to review performance.

Comet Bay Primary School has clearly identified a focus on numeracy for 2012 and literacy for 2013. Both form a focus for the targets of the Business Plan and adequate resources and professional learning are being provided in each. Whole of school approaches led by key staff have introduced new strategies to challenge all students. Timetabling of uninterrupted literacy and numeracy blocks underlines the importance given to the focus areas.

Strategies introduced to improve numeracy outcomes include:
• appointment of a dedicated maths specialist
• the development of “Maths Challenge” in conjunction with an ECU expert
• whole school disciplined dialogue in team time on maths strategies
• First Steps Facilitator on staff leading professional learning
• moderation exercises
• adoption of DiMaths (Diagnostic maths) as a monitoring tool that is undertaken three times per year giving reliable data to staff and parents
• introduction of a maths journal in years 6 and 7
• early years literacy and numeracy professional learning provided by the WA Primary Principals’ Association (WAPPA).

Maths speed activities are conducted in every class three times a week and results monitored. The specialist teacher uses data from DiMaths and Maths Challenge to identify areas of weakness and strength and, to address this, plans scope and sequencing to be used by teaching teams across the school. The school is commended on the programs in place to support student learning.

The school is comprehensive in its analysis of data and comparison of performance in relation to national and state standards. Evidence gathered and its interrogation by teachers and the Board is commended.
Comparison of school performance to like schools is undertaken but due to the rapid expansion of the school the data is not regarded as valid by the school. The data upon which like schools are determined is seen as invalid within a year because Comet Bay is changing so rapidly as a school and community. Like schools comparison is based on 2006 census data and the Comet Bay Primary School (then comprising 420 students) bears little resemblance to the current school with 1028 students. The school therefore undertakes benchmarking with the local Singleton and Secret Harbour Primary Schools. The reviewers affirm that Comet Bay Primary School has undergone rapid expansion making comparison with like schools unreliable.

4b. School Performance - Quality of Learning Environment

The reviewers were able to verify a shared vision and ethos with staff, parents and the community through intensive staff interactions and discussions with board members, community representatives, students and parents. Through community consultation the school was set up as a 'health promoting school' where the domains of curriculum, ethos and partnerships are interconnected. At the whole school level the reviewers sighted clear evidence of this being translated into sets of beliefs and values, strategies and programs about teaching and learning to equip students to reach their potential. The school is commended on developing and embedding a vision for learning based on high expectations, effective pastoral care, responding to individual differences, integrating technology in learning and developing partnerships between the staff, students, parents and the community.

Staff use explicit teaching methodology in literacy and numeracy and this is being extended to all areas of the curriculum. The school has timetabled a common literacy and numeracy block of time for each year level with the objective of improving student performance in these areas. The reviewers observed a very high level of curriculum planning and sharing between staff supported by curriculum leaders, literacy and numeracy coaches and specialist teachers.

The school is commended on the targeted work it is doing in literacy and numeracy and on the planning and sharing reported and observed between teachers.

The school leadership team consisting of the Principal and three deputies along with many examples of distributed leadership across the school has developed and is continuing to drive a climate of improvement in the school. The school has pursued a number of strategies and programs that have resulted in many benefits for student learning and the school community. These strategies include:
The appointment of curriculum leaders and learning support coordinator with time allowance to facilitate staff planning, sharing and target setting.

The appointment of literacy and numeracy coaches.

The utilisation of information from a series of other tests such as ACER Progressive Achievement Tests (PATS) in addition to NAPLAN data to form a comprehensive database to analyse and improve student learning.

Professional development strategies to improve staff skills, particularly in the areas of literacy and numeracy.

Technology in teaching and learning programs – the school is trialling the use of iPad technology with a goal to be involved in an online portal program involving a ‘one stop shop’ for teachers and parents as a communication tool with the possibility of further development into student access.

Although not collocated on the one campus there is strong partnership between Comet Bay Primary School and the Early Childhood Annex – there are early indications of collaborative planning and early intervention strategies to ensure positive outcomes for students in transition to the Primary School.

The initiative where Year 7 students spend time at Comet Bay College as part of a High School Transition Program.

The school was able to demonstrate to the reviewers that, although there was a concerted effort to improve the below-benchmark and low-achieving performance of their students, it also catered for higher achievers with extension work both within the classroom and in specialised courses. The reviewers noted that the school, despite being disillusioned by the lack of improvement in its students’ performance based on the 2012 NAPLAN results, was being very proactive in its analysis. The reviewers noted the school’s use of a variety of other external indicators to inform its whole school curriculum planning, recognising that it will take time to develop longitudinal trends, but commends the school on the very specific focus it places in achieving success for all students through a range of strategies and resources.

Due to the rapid growth and other demographic factors the school did not consider a ‘like’ school analysis as valid. While acknowledging the comparison with ‘like’ schools is currently unreliable, the reviewers indicated that a comparative analysis with ‘like’ schools in all areas of the NAPLAN testing would be a useful tool for program planning. The reviewers recommend the school includes ‘like’ school comparative data in its analysis.

The reviewers were able to affirm the Comet Bay Primary School positive culture and inclusive environment that values and supports all students. Meetings with the Board, a number of parents and students provided verification and evidence of the
positive culture developed in the school, the inclusion of all students and a focus on learning. It also demonstrated the effective partnership between parents and the school and the use of community partnerships in providing enhanced opportunities for teaching and learning.

A key event applauded by parents and board members is the ‘learning journeys’ program where parents, staff and students come together to share the achievements of students and the school.

Teachers verified the school’s processes and strategies that supported their work and that are instrumental in their pastoral care program. Key elements of the care demonstrated for students were evident in the comprehensive focus on individual performance, the SAER program and Primary Extension and Challenge (PEAC) courses. These support programs are delivered in a number of teaching scenarios designed to meet individual needs including assistance to staff in making adjustments to the learning programs for students at risk, students with learning difficulties and students with a disability.

The school has developed a positive, inclusive perspective aimed at building wellbeing, deploying resources and strategies such as Positive Psychology to assist in developing the culture. This extends to the involvement of the Chaplain to support students in managing their social skills and developing emotional resilience and the School Psychologist to assist in student socio-emotional issues and in supporting learning needs. The school is also fortunate to have a part-time Defence Liaison Officer who supports those families that are attached to the Navy.

The personalised approach to each student and positive student/teacher engagement is a key element of the learning environment, with all classes engaged in the Tribes program to reinforce appropriate values and behaviours. Teachers undergo training in this area and it was evident that parents hold the Tribes program in high regard. The reviewers were able to verify and affirm the success of the strategies used by the school in developing a positive, calm and purposeful environment that was consistently demonstrated across the school.

The school is commended on developing a quality learning environment with strategies and actions that are socially inclusive and engage students in learning while providing an atmosphere that fosters care and wellbeing.
4c. School Performance - Sustainability

Comet Bay Primary School has a positive attitude that pervades the whole school. The leadership, staff, students and parents promote this attitude when discussing all aspects of the school. Distributed leadership is evident throughout the school and individual leaders are clear as to their particular role and expectations. This was evident to reviewers through documentation, discussion with leaders and visitation to team meetings and classrooms. Curriculum planning is conducted in focus groups. The Principal is commended for developing the strong focus on distributed leadership through the deputies and team leaders. At the whole school level, the Principal has focused strongly on support for parents to enable them to participate in the education process by having excellent communication in place with parents and conducting activities on site that foster interaction between teachers and parents.

The distributed leadership employed at the school is working well in achieving the school's goals and in supporting its ethos. Discussions confirmed that succession planning for both the Board and leadership of the school is being undertaken to ensure that existing practice and programs can be sustained into the future.

The school engages in evidence-based self-review practices particularly in the priority areas where data is readily available. The database developed by the Principal is comprehensive, being applied across the whole curriculum. It has the ability to provide information on whole of school performance as well as detect every student not performing to potential. It reflects a genuine concern for critical self-review informed by quality data. The data bank is well understood by both teaching staff and board members. Based upon data analysis, areas for improvement in academic and non-academic domains are identified. The Principal is commended on the significant work that he has done in compiling this rich database of student information for staff to analyse. The school practice of self-reflection based on data related to student performance, attendance and behaviour is affirmed.

When the Australian Curriculum is embedded staff will be able to moderate their assessments of student performance in learning areas using the achievement standards. Tracking student performance in academic and non-academic domains to identify areas for improvement is a feature that will sustain future development.

Quality planning and target setting is evident within the school across the curriculum particularly in the focus areas of literacy and numeracy. Targets set in the Operational Plan by teams are more effective than those of the Business Plan, in that they are challenging and measurable targets that receive constant monitoring by the class teacher and team leaders. Through collaborative practice, strategies are
implemented to achieve the identified targets relating to student performance. Staff input to the targets contained in the Business Plan relating to student performance was minimal. The reviewers recommend that the staff be consulted in developing the targets for the new Business Plan and that the new targets be clear, challenging, measurable and achievable.

Teaching practice is under constant review at the School. Recognition that ‘quality teaching leads to quality learning’ is the premise upon which professional learning is provided at the school. Appropriate professional learning which is adequately resourced, and a focus on up-skilling informs teacher development. Performance management processes are also in alignment with this philosophy.

All staff are supported in improving their pedagogy to achieve improved student learning. As previously detailed, appropriate professional learning has been provided, particularly in the focus areas of literacy and numeracy. In addition the school has several staff trained as facilitators in Classroom Management Strategies (CMS) and Instructional Strategies (IS). All staff have opportunity for feedback on their teaching through the CMS observation and reflective discussion process and/or to improve their pedagogy through accessing the IS course. The planning for sustainability of provision of multiple strategies to improve pedagogy is affirmed.

The Board provides critical oversight and reflection on school performance and self-review. Under strong leadership it is clearly a very ‘hands on’ organisation that focuses on fulfilling its role in accordance with its terms of reference. Board processes are embedded and it is clear that members have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Sustainability for the Board is related to developing sound processes for succession planning and ensuring that its accountability and oversight roles related to reviewing the school’s performance, endorsing budgets and determining the satisfaction levels of parents, staff and students are functioning effectively. Discussions with the Board affirmed that as a part of the self-review cycle, it would review its own performance on a regular basis against the expectations contained in the DPA.

Engagement of the community has been a priority of the school since opening in 2007. The programs and strategies deployed to engage parents and the community with the aim of building relationships between parents and the school is affirmed. These actions aim to strengthen the efforts of the Principal and staff in improving student learning through the strategies and programs implemented. These include provision of guest speakers, the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Gardens program, Running Records, Sight Words and individual reading programs where parent help is enlisted.
Comet Bay Primary School has effectively developed a sustainable education process where, under strong leadership at all levels, teachers are able to focus on improving their pedagogy to meet the needs of their students. Parents are encouraged to be active participants in their children’s education by engagement that builds their capacity and knowledge, invites them into the classroom and is focused on building a positive relationship with the school.
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 our assessment of the evidence provided by Comet Bay 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.

(Signature of Graham Rixon, LeadReviewer) 20 December 2012 (Date)

(Signature of Kevin Pilkington, Reviewer) 20 December 2012 (Date)

(Signature of Richard Strickland, CEO, Department of Education Services) 8/1/2013 (Date)