



Government of Western Australia  
Department of Education Services

# Sevenoaks Senior College

2013

Independent Review Findings



Independent Review of  
Independent Public Schools

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## Disclaimer

This document has been based on the findings of the independent reviewers' verification of the College's self-review. The College's self-review has been complemented by information provided by the Department of Education, the School Curriculum and Standards Authority 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

<b>Principal:</b>	Dr Karen Read
<b>Board Chair:</b>	Prof Marnie O'Neill
<b>School Location:</b>	275 Sevenoaks Street Cannington WA 6017
<b>School Classification:</b>	Senior Campus Class 6
<b>Number of Students:</b>	450
<b>Independent Reviewers:</b>	Ms Pauline Coghlan and Mr Don Boyd
<b>Review Dates:</b>	Self-review presentation: 6 March 2013 Review visits: 27 and 28 March 2013

### 1. About the Independent Review

The purpose of the independent review of Sevenoaks Senior College 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 *My School*<sup>TM</sup> website
- the Department of Education School Performance Monitoring System
- Schools Online reports
- School Curriculum and Standards Authority Year 12 Student Achievement data.

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**

Sevenoaks Senior College has an enrolment of 450. The Index of Community Socio-Education Advantage (ICSEA) for the College is 913.8 placing it in the eighth decile of schools in Western Australia. The College has a complex student demographic, which includes 39 different nationalities. Aboriginal enrolments are 14%. Despite this diversity there is a very harmonious and positive atmosphere across the College.

The College is committed to providing opportunities for all students and in particular success for disengaged students. There are three pathway options that cater for a diverse range of students' needs and abilities: Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE); Vocational Education and Training (VET); and Canning Skills.

Leadership is distributed across the College and at all levels there is a focus on continually improving teaching and learning.

Discussions took place with the Board Chair, Principal, board members, administrative and teaching staff, support staff and students in each pathway. Classes in each pathway were observed by reviewers. Extensive high quality written self-review documentation was also made available.

The College is commended on the following features:

- The well-established, distinctive young adult learning environment that caters for the complex educational needs of students.
- The culture of robust self-review and continuous improvement, which is embedded across Sevenoaks Senior College.
- The rigorous monitoring of the learning environment and making adjustments as a result of this.
- The use of evidence-based data to drive improvement and change, at whole of college and classroom levels.
- The provision of a wide range of programs, including programs to attract the disengaged and to accommodate the extreme social, mental health and life issues experienced by a number of students.
- Improved student performance in Year 12 WACE ATAR students.
- The rigour and efforts in the establishment of the Trade Training Centre programs: Certificate II in Automotive and Metals & Engineering.
- The range and flexibility of the Canning Skills programs.

- The immense support provided through *Follow the Dream* program for Aboriginal students.
- Community and research partnerships with Curtin University and Edith Cowan University.

The following areas are affirmed as worthy of continued implementation or areas of improvement already identified by the College:

- The full embedding of the developed WACE (ATAR) strategies to ensure continued improvement to the level of WACE examination performance.
- The continued focus on the attainment of Certificate II.
- Target setting refinement to ensure realistic, meaningful and achievable targets.
- Enhancement of the specificity of targets, including the broadening of VET targets to better reflect the full range of courses; and the development of targets for the Canning Skills programs that better reflect aspects of their non-academic achievements, of which there is already considerable relevant data available.
- Attendance, which is pivotal to student achievement.
- The explicit reporting on the progress of each target in the Annual Report.



### **3. School Context**

Sevenoaks Senior College is in its thirteenth year of providing a unique education within a complex and challenging context. Located in the south-east metropolitan corridor, the College is the result of extensive Local Area Education Planning (LAEP) in the late 1990s. The challenge was to create a more suitable and relevant learning environment for post-compulsory students, especially those who were not engaging or fully engaging in education. The College commenced Independent Public School status in 2010.

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The demographic mix of the College is complex. During the period of the current Business Plan, the Aboriginal population has remained constant at 14%. There is also a notable Turkish population. An emerging trend has been the changing and increasing cultural diversity of students in the College. The identified Language Background other than English (LBOTE) student enrolment has significantly increased from 13% in 2010, 20% in 2011 to 25% in 2012. Students born outside Australia comprise: 47 students (8.2%) in 2010; 101 students (18.2%) in 2011; and 119 students (22.4%) in 2012. During the three year period of the Business Plan, 32 students arrived from nine African countries; 58 students from the Philippines; and 43 students from Afghanistan in addition to students from several other countries. In total, 39 different nationalities are currently enrolled at Sevenoaks Senior College. Many of these students arrive with complex backgrounds including refugee status, limited prior educational opportunities, limited English language and an extensive range of cultural experiences. There is a very harmonious atmosphere across the College. The convivial nature of the College was very evident to the reviewers and confirmed by staff, students and Board members.

On establishment of the College in 2001 the Department of Education gave the Principal the authority to select staff. This has enabled the College to recruit staff with the skill sets suited to working in this complex educational environment. Staff turnover is very low. Many staff have been at the College since it commenced or arrived soon after. Some of these staff have served in a number of roles thus providing them with a deep understanding of the College's ethos from various perspectives.

Physically the Sevenoaks Senior College campus is a mix of new buildings and those that were part of the previous Cannington Senior High School (CSHS). The buildings add much to the creation of a modern professional setting that is well suited to the College's ethos of providing a young adult learning environment. The Year 11 and 12 WACE courses and VET teaching and learning programs are provided in the newer building. This building also houses the library, cafeteria, and administration. Retained former CSHS buildings have been refurbished and blend in well with the new facilities making Sevenoaks Senior College a vibrant place for teaching and learning. The Canning Skills program is conducted in the refurbished wing of the College. The opening of the new Trade Training Centre in November last year (2012) has further enhanced the effectiveness of the College in relation to the provision of certificate courses in the automotive and engineering areas.

Sevenoaks Senior College receives funding to deliver three additional programs; *Follow the Dream* (FTD), Aboriginal Tutorial Assistance Scheme (ATAS) and the Senior Secondary Engagement Program. The way in which these and other resources are utilised to cater of the learning needs of students is clearly articulated in the College's Business Plan. Sevenoaks Senior College has since its inception been active in obtaining funding and resourcing from a range of external sources. During the three year period of the current Business Plan the College was successful in attracting \$25,000 through the National Bank Australia's *First A School Awards* program to establish their *Young Active Parent Program*. The College's new Trade Training Centre has secured support from the Automotive Holding Group (AGH) for the provision of five vehicles to support the delivery of the Certificate II Light Automotive.

The Sevenoaks Senior College Board has an established 12 year history. Over that time it has had only three board chairs. The range of representation includes University, Training Organisations, Industry, Not for Profit Agency, Community and key College staff. Board members bring a wealth of expertise and experience to the College.



#### 4a. School Performance - Student Learning

Four key purpose statements have guided the monitoring and development of Sevenoaks Senior College since it opened in 2001. They are the extent to which:

1. students progress along a defined learning continuum
2. students engage in, enjoy and value their school, training and/or work based education and social development program
3. students move successfully from Sevenoaks Senior College to further education and/or training and/or employment
4. students develop the social skills and expertise to participate successfully in their community.

These are well embedded and understood in the College. This was evident throughout the discussions with the Board Chair, Principal and staff. The *Sevenoaks Senior College 2010-2013 Business Plan* includes the purpose statements, indicators of success and specific targets relating to each of the above purpose statements.

The College delivers three pathway options to cater for the diverse range of students' needs and abilities: WACE; VET; Canning Skills. Classes in each pathway were observed by reviewers. Discussions took place with staff, support staff and students in each pathway. Extensive, high quality written self-review documentation was also made available.

Improved student performance in Year 12 has occurred. The School Curriculum and Standards Authority (SCSA) Year 12 Student Achievement data indicates that in 2012 there were 144 eligible WACE students. Of these, 142 (98.61%) students achieved graduation.

##### **WACE/ATAR**

In 2012 Sevenoaks Senior College was the 10th ranked public school in the *First 50 WACE* list, which is based on the number of Stage 3 course enrolments where a WACE course score of 75 or above was achieved. Sevenoaks Senior College was ranked 43rd in relation to all schools in Western Australia.

The College routinely compares its performance with the State rather than making like-schools comparisons as it is committed to setting a higher benchmark. Despite having an ICSEA of 913, which places Sevenoaks Senior

College in the third lowest decile in the State, improved results were also shown with a median ATAR of 72.3. This was only just below the State public school median of 75.9 and well above that of like schools (63.6).

There has also been a significant improvement in the alignment with the State triles. Student Achievement Information System (SAIS) shows that a reduction has occurred from 63% (2011) to 44% (2012) in the bottom trile and an increase from 16% (2011) to 25% (2012) in the top trile.

Tertiary Institutions Service Centre (TISC) data indicates that all 32 WACE examination students achieved an ATAR >50. A very positive achievement.

Each year staff review their individual courses as well as engaging in the collective performance review of the College. Areas for improvement are identified and associated improvement strategies implemented, which are articulated in the Annual Report to the Board and College community. Some key improvement strategies contributing to these improved results have been implemented during the last two years. They include a consistent whole College approach to curriculum assessment and planning, introduction of the Advocacy Support Panel, the positive insistence on prerequisite standards, a Pathway to University one hour weekly program, as well as targeted career counselling sessions using the SAIS ATAR predictor.

The College is commended on the improved student performance and the strategies that have been implemented. The reviewers affirm the Principal's conclusion that the challenge is to fully embed all these strategies and to continue with this improved level of WACE examination performance.

### **WACE/Vocational Education and Training**

The School Curriculum and Standards Authority (SCSA) Year 12 Student Achievement data indicates that in 2010 17% (21) VET students achieved an Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Certificate II, compared with 14% (20) in 2011 and 41.33% (31) in 2012. In addition, four students completed Aboriginal School-based Traineeships in 2012. The College has clearly placed renewed emphasis on Certificate II attainment.

In 2012 there were 11 Certificate II, six Certificate III and four Certificate I courses available. The College continues to broaden opportunities for the diverse range of student interests by introducing Certificate II in Dance and Certificate II in Sport and Recreation for 2013.



School-based Traineeships (SBT) is another vehicle to engage particular students. There has been a steady increase in students participating in SBT from 13 in 2008 to 29 in 2012. In 2012 seven students completed their SBT, 14 are continuing and eight did not complete the training.

Sevenoaks Senior College is a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) and delivers and awards Certificates in Business, Hospitality and Information, Digital Media & Technology. It is registered until end 2016 having successfully undergone a renewal of registration audit in November 2011. The College also partners with public and private RTOs for the delivery of a range of other VET qualifications and units.

The VET Program Coordinator rigorously monitors all certificate enrolments (partial and full), their completion rates and the School-based Traineeship/Apprenticeships, using a composite spread sheet.

The reviewers affirm the College's judgements regarding the two VET related targets. One is no longer relevant (completion of units of competence) and the other which was highly aspirational and narrowly focused on only two certificates, may need to be broadened to better reflect achievements in all VET courses.

The Sevenoaks Senior College Trade Training Centre has been a focus in the 2010-2013 Business Plan. It commenced operations at the beginning of 2012 and was officially opened in October 2012. The facility has provided even further opportunities for students and enabled them to complete a Certificate II in either Automotive or Metals & Engineering. In addition, to ensure that potential students understand the skills and standards that are necessary for success, the College conducts a Year 10 taster program (1 day per week) for the two main contributing schools. Of the 29 students that participated in the Year 10 program in 2012, 19 indicated that they would be continuing with the program in 2013. The Trade Training Centre, as in other VET areas, reviews its performance annually with a view to identifying areas of improvements. These are reported in the Annual Report. The College is commended on its endeavour in the establishment of the Trade Training Centre programs and the rigour in setting high standards.

### **Canning Skills**

The third pathway is the Canning Skills program. In 2012, 112 students participated in the programs of which 49 were Aboriginal. Every Canning Skills student operates from an Individual Education Plan (IEP). These were sighted



by the reviewers. The IEP articulates students' dreams and aspirations and then maps a pathway by which students may achieve them.

The Canning Skills program has three streams for students:

- Fast Track (40 students)
- Fast Track Flexi (49 students) and
- Move On (23 students)

Fast Track caters for the needs of senior school aged students who require additional assistance and support to engage in their education to reach a Year 10 standard. They are typically educationally disengaged youth. The Certificate II in General Education for Adults (CGEA) is the basis for the program along with a range of Certificate I competency based courses. e.g. Essential First Aid Certificate; Keys for Life Driver Education Learner Permit; Aboriginal Studies Certificate; Work Safe in the Construction and Industry White Card. In 2012, 17 of the 40 Fast Track students completed the CGEA II. Of these 17, seven were Aboriginal students.

The Fast Track Flexi and Move On programs enable students to access an educational program which will give them skills to further their education. Many of these students have been severely disengaged with education with issues pertaining to home environment and life choices. Youth Workers are employed by the College and play an integral support role in these programs.

After completing Fast Track or Fast Track Flexi there is an opportunity to continue in the "Move On" stream, if needed, before accessing the VET or WACE programs. The College is committed to providing opportunities and success for disengaged students. Reviewers also acknowledge the dedication of all Canning Skills program staff. Reviewers affirm the College's self-assessment that the targets for the Canning Skills programs could better reflect some of their non-academic achievements, of which there is already considerable relevant data available.

As part of the College's culture of critical self-review, the destinations of all Year 12 students are routinely surveyed, monitored and reported to the Board through the Annual Report. With an 85% response rate the four main destinations were 33% University; 34% TAFE; 18% employment; and 7% Apprenticeship/Traineeship.

Sevenoaks Senior College reports on its performance through the Annual Report to the College Board. The 2010 and 2011 Annual Reports detail data

(indicators of success) relating to the four purpose statements, however do not explicitly draw conclusions as to the current progress in meeting the targets that the College had set. The reviewers affirm the Principal's conclusion that explicit reporting on the progress of each target should be even further incorporated into the Annual Report. The most recent Annual Report (2012) reflects evidence of moving towards this.

Rigorous self-review of College performance has been conducted. To achieve this, an action research model was implemented at the beginning of 2011. The methodology is cyclical with seven phases. It is also multi-layered with several phases during each school year. An excellent summative self-review document spanning 2010, 2011 and 2012 provides the linkage between the purpose statements, indicators and targets with a clear statement of the College's self-assessment. For each target the College has judged itself as either "performance below target: moving toward target: monitor performance; or excellent progress with the target."

The College purpose statements 1 (students progress along a defined learning continuum) and 3 (students move from Sevenoaks Senior College to further education and/or training and/or employment) relate directly to school performance and student learning. In these areas the College set 11 targets. It judged itself as making "excellent progress " with two targets. For seven targets the College rated themselves as "Moving toward target: monitor performance". The remaining two targets were judged as no longer relevant. The reviewers concur with all these judgements having examined the relevant data sets, Annual Reports, board minutes and having held discussions with staff, students and board members.

The reviewers affirm the conclusion of the Principal and Board Chair in relation to many of the targets: namely, that their specificity is an area in need of considerable refinement. Whilst staff indicated that there had been limited input into the original setting of targets, they also indicated that the current Principal has fully involved the relevant staff in the review of both student performance and the setting of targets for the next Business Plan. The relevant staff have enthusiastically embraced this opportunity to participate.

### **4b. School Performance - Quality of Learning Environment**

The College uses an evidence-based approach to drive improvement and change. The quality of the learning environment is measured annually using



the Curtin University *Effective School Improvement & School Organisational Climate Survey*. This partnership in research has been in place since the College opened in 2001. Students are asked to specifically rate, on a scale of one to five, dimensions of: student cohesiveness, young adult ethos, attitude to subject and academic efficacy. Curtin University provides a comprehensive report, which includes detailed data analysis. This is shared with the Board and staff and used to identify focus areas and/or areas in need of improvement.

The overall student perceptions of the learning environment are very positive with many scores above 3.5 in all of the four dimensions. A mean score greater than 3.5 is deemed to be a very positive outcome. Student acknowledgement of a constructive learning environment was further confirmed through the review process. During interviews, students spoke of the high quality teachers; freedom with limits; the independent environment; support from staff; their enjoyment of the multicultural student mix and the value that the College places on this. Diversity is highly valued as is evident from the involvement of students in Harmony Day and the calm atmosphere within the College.

Teachers routinely use their classroom results from the *Student Engagement Research* and *Effective School Improvement* projects to help them develop and improve classroom practices and to seek appropriate professional learning. These surveys with their detailed analyses are significant drivers in focusing on maintaining or improving the classroom learning environment.

The College, in its 2012 Annual Report (p23), states that “*Attendance and engagement in education is the key to a prosperous future hence, every effort is made to ensure that students attend regularly*” ....” *Attendance, which is pivotal to student achievement, remains one of our greatest challenges.*” Student overall attendance rate (79%) is below the State (88%). This overall pattern has changed little over the last three years. However, within categories, changes have occurred. The Department of Education’s Schools Online statistics show that of the 2012 Year 11 cohort 37% attended “regularly” (i.e. students who attend 90% or more) compared with the State regular attendance of 58%. In Year 12 regular attendance has improved from 31% in 2011 (State 62%) to 46% in 2012 (State 64%). Staff indicate that attendance rates vary considerably between the three pathway options: WACE ATAR, WACE VET and Canning Skills. The College continues to identify and implement strategies to raise the level of attendance and considering setting targets within each pathway may be useful.



The College provides a wide range of programs to attract the disengaged and to accommodate the extreme social, mental health and life issues experienced by a number of students. A team approach (Careers Counsellor, Program Coordinator College Operations, Program Coordinator Student Outcomes and Advocates) is used to find the most appropriate course tailored for each individual student. Sevenoaks Senior College, through its Canning Skills program continues to welcome referrals from Juvenile Justice, Participation Co-ordinators and the Department of Child Protection. Sevenoaks Senior College considers the engagement of students as their biggest challenge.

The College has also partnered with Edith Cowan University in a student engagement research project, which measures students' perceptions of their social connectedness (across the dimensions of "support" and "belonging") and their level of academic engagement (across the dimensions of "satisfaction with subject", "involvement in studies", "confidence" and "self-efficacy"). The purpose of the research is to improve the College's understanding of participation issues and student engagement. A critical score of 3.5 is considered a positive indicator of the dimension being measured. In both Years 11 and 12 scores above 3.5 are evident across many of the dimensions, with even higher scores in Year 12.

Individual student monitoring is a reality at Sevenoaks Senior College. The Advocacy program is integral to establishing and maintaining a positive school environment. Every teacher has a group of students and is responsible for monitoring their academic progress and focusing on students' social and emotional wellbeing. In addition students in the Trade Training Centre, *Follow the Dream* and Canning Skills programs each have individual career and transition plans. During the review, staff often referred to the importance of two recent professional learning programs *Understanding Poverty* and *Difference Differently*, which have occurred over the past two years. These programs help staff build a better understanding of the complex issues impacting on student achievement. They also provide teachers with the background to develop pedagogical practices to cater for the range of different learning needs across the College.

The College always looks for ways to enhance its effectiveness. The College values feedback and acts on it. In response to the 2011 annual self-review, the Advocacy Support Panel was established. This further strengthened support for the Advocates and students at risk. Another strategy introduced in 2012, following self-review, was enhanced course counselling. All Year 12

students now receive at least two counselling sessions related to improving their individual ATAR.

The *Follow the Dream* program, now in its ninth year of operation at Sevenoaks Senior College has created an environment that gives Aboriginal students immense support through mentoring; personalised individual education plans; life skill; high self-esteem activities; academic and career guidance, and work placements. Extensive individual and family support is offered to all students. All Aboriginal students receive professional tutoring to support them with their academic work. The *Follow the Dream* program at Sevenoaks Senior College works in partnership with Yule Brook and Cannington Community College. The program has significantly impacted on the number of Aboriginal students achieving secondary graduation. For the last three years every Aboriginal student in the WACE pathway has graduated. In 2012 there were seven Aboriginal students in this pathway.

Two of the four College purpose statements relate directly to the quality of the learning environment: purpose statement 2 (students engage in, enjoy and value their school, training and/or work based education and social development program) and purpose statement 4 (students develop the social skills and expertise to participate successfully in their community). In these areas the College set 8 targets. They judged themselves as making “excellent progress” with four targets, “moving toward target: monitor performance” for two targets and “performance below target” in relation to the attendance target. Accurate data was not readily available for the remaining target. The reviewers endorse all of the above College’s self-assessment judgements.

The reviewers concur with the view of the Principal and Board Chair regarding the above targets, specifically for the next Business Plan several targets in this area could be reduced as they were repetitive. Furthermore, accurate wording of the new targets would better reflect the appropriate data sets.

Reviewers, after examining the relevant data sets and holding discussions with staff, students, board members and the Principal, affirm the College’s self-assessment. Sevenoaks Senior College has not only displayed effective self-reflection and review of its wide range of programs and strategies to engage students but has also rigorously monitored the learning environment and made adjustments as a result.



#### 4c. School Performance - Sustainability

A culture of self-review and continuous improvement is embedded across Sevenoaks Senior College. A distinctive young adult learning environment to cater for the complex educational needs of students is well established.

Evidence of this robust self-review includes:

- operational plans and targets linked to strategies designed to bring about improved student achievement, both academic and non-academic
- comprehensive data collection and deep analysis
- student achievement data analysis at various levels across the College including; classroom, learning area, program, and leadership teams
- reporting annually to the College Board and community
- data analysis informs the development of new targets and the next phase of College planning for improvement
- provision of professional learning in response to the analysis of student performance data
- collaborative self-review practices well established across the College.

The independent review process and the comprehensive self-review undertaken by the College of its first Business Plan has highlighted the need to refine target setting to ensure that they are realistic, meaningful and achievable.

The relative continuity of the College's leadership team along with significant input from the College Board has ensured that the strong self-review and continuous improvement processes that were a feature of the founding Principal and Board have remained. At the same time, relatively recent leadership change has provided the opportunity for renewal and reinforcement of the College vision through *Understanding Poverty and Difference Differently* staff professional learning. This has been timely, especially in light of the challenges such as the raised school leaving age and the changing demographic brought about by the high influx of recently arrived migrants to the area.

Leadership is distributed across the College and at all levels focuses on continually improving teaching and learning. Furthermore, staff believe they are well supported by the College's leadership team. Data collected in the *School Organisational Climate Survey (SOCS)* (Curtin University – *Effective*



*School Improvement Program*) confirm this with staff rating highly that they are strongly supported by the Principal.

All members of the leadership team were interviewed. They all provided comprehensive information about how student/school performance data are collated, analysed and used. Two key leadership roles supporting the College's ability to sustain its performance review processes are the Program Coordinator – Teaching and Learning and the Program Coordinator – Student Outcomes. Importantly, both of these roles involve working with staff to determine individual teacher and whole school professional learning needs based on gaps and weaknesses identified through data analysis. Both coordinators attributed the overall success of engaging students and improving achievement to such practices as; baseline testing, the increasing culture of reviewing data across the College, basing professional learning on data analysis and additional tuition for students in need.

The monitoring of student engagement and the overall College "climate" is well embedded. The College continues to invest substantially each year in contracting Edith Cowan University (*Student Engagement Research*) and Curtin University (*Effective School Improvement - High Schools*) to refine surveys, then collect and analyse appropriate data. The College uses this information to drive improvement and change at all levels. Several of the staff referred to these surveys and how the analysis of data informs their teaching and learning as well as the identification of professional learning. For example when the need to have a stronger focus on equity was identified in the Fast Track program, the Fast Track Coordinator modified the classroom environment and a more culturally sensitive pedagogy was used. The effective use of evidence is well embedded and has been sustained over the past 12 years. Other data sets routinely used include information from the TISC, the SCSA and SAIS.

The Principal, Vice Principal and Business Manager work as a team to monitor workforce requirements and manage the process of recruitment and selection of teaching and non-teaching staff. Workforce planning is a strong feature of the College. Strategies are in place to deal with local and systemic factors such as changing demographics and the movement of the half student cohort through Years 11 and 12. Three years of planning by the Board and the administration staff of the College ensured a successful transition to the half-cohort with minimal impact on the staffing profile of the College. The planning enabled the College to move forward into 2013 with little disruption enabling programs to be sustained and continuity of the established learning

programs. Professional learning needs are embedded in workforce planning and informed by student performance data.

Future work-force issues have been considered, the demographics of the teaching work-force and the general health of an ageing workforce. Future risks have been considered by Board and College. These include programs that may be impacted through loss of funding, loss of teachers or a reduction in students.

The College has progressed efficiently through the transition to a one-line budget and has successfully put into practice strategies to manage the School Flexible Salary Allocation and the Relief Flexible Salary Allocation .

The extent to which Sevenoaks Senior College is successful in obtaining external funding and resourcing also demonstrates the positive relationship the College has with its community including a broad cross section of businesses and agencies. Staff and board members were keen to acknowledge the successful partnerships the College has established to enhance its ability to impact on student achievement. This is especially so in the VET and Canning Skills programs. The College's Annual Report provides information on these partnerships.

A review of the board documentation indicates that the Board functions appropriately and effectively. This was confirmed through discussion with board members. Board members bring a wealth of expertise and experience to the College. Succession planning is in place to ensure that the depth and relevance of skills needed to oversee the College effectiveness is maintained and strengthened.


It is the view of the Board Chair that the success of the College can be attributed to: the quality and commitment of staff, retention of staff, ability of the College to select staff, strong Principal leadership and flexibility granted to the College on establishment, which is now embedded with IPS status, enabling it to be innovative and make a real difference for young people.

The reviewers confirm that Sevenoaks Senior College is well placed to sustain and improve its performance.

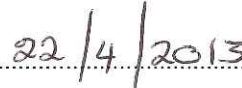


## Declaration

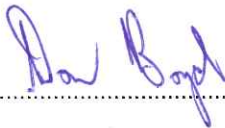
We the undersigned hereby confirm that the information provided in this findings document is to the best of our knowledge true and correct and is based on our assessment of the evidence provided by Sevenoaks Senior College as part of the Department of Education Services' independent review process. The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



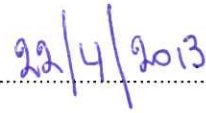
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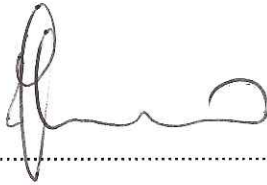
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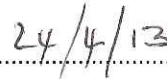
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(Signature of Richard Strickland, CEO, Department of Education Services)



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