



# School Excellence Framework

## Overview

### Introduction

NSW public schools are committed to the pursuit of excellence and the provision of high-quality educational opportunities for each and every child. This in turn facilitates the consistent improvement of student outcomes and the narrowing of achievement gaps between students.

Our aim is to maximise learning in our schools, including that students achieve at least a year's worth of learning from every year's teaching.

The School Excellence Framework supports all NSW public schools in their pursuit of excellence by providing a clear description of the key elements of high-quality practice across the three domains of learning, teaching and leading.

The Framework describes 14 elements across these three domains which define the core business of excellent schools in three stages. Each year, schools will assess their practices against the Framework to inform their school plans and annual school reports. The description of excellence in the Framework supports schools as they engage their communities in the development of a shared vision, the identification of strategic priorities, and the ongoing tracking of progress towards them.

### The focus is on students

All parents want the very best for their children. In education, this means teachers and schools with a commitment to nurture, guide, inspire and challenge students – to find the joy in learning, to build their skills and understanding, and to make sense of their world. In the early years, it means having confidence that each individual child will be known and understood, and their individual potential developed. As students progress, it means knowing that they are well-supported as increasingly self-motivated learners – confident and creative individuals, with the personal resources for future success and wellbeing.

### Excellence in learning

The journey to excellence for students in NSW public schools begins during the first important weeks of Kindergarten. Every child brings a different set of experiences, knowledge and

skills to school with them, and understanding these is essential to planning their individual learning paths. From the earliest school days and throughout their time at school, teachers use information about individual students' capabilities and needs to plan for students' learning so as to engage them in rich learning experiences, developing the vital skills for flourishing – now and in future years. By sharing information about learning development, teachers engage parents as active participants in their children's education. At the other end of schooling, teachers and schools support students to make successful transitions to future learning or employment, with the skills to make informed contributions as citizens and leaders.

### Excellence in teaching

Student learning is underpinned in excellent schools by high-quality teaching and leadership. Teaching in these schools is distinguished by universally high levels of professionalism and commitment. Lessons and learning opportunities are engaging and teaching strategies are evidence-based. Individually and collaboratively, teachers evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching practices, including sophisticated analysis of student engagement, learning growth and outcomes, to plan for the ongoing learning of each student in their care. Teachers take shared responsibility for student improvement and contribute to a transparent learning culture, including through the observation of each other's practices.

### Excellence in leading

Strong, strategic and effective leadership is the cornerstone of school excellence. Excellent leaders have a commitment to fostering a school-wide culture of high expectations and a shared sense of responsibility for student engagement, learning, development and success. Students benefit from the school's planned and proactive engagement with the parent and broader community. Leaders in excellent schools ensure that operational issues, such as resource allocation and accountability requirements, serve the overarching strategic vision of the school community. Ultimately, leaders in these schools enable a self-sustaining and self-improving community that will continue to support the highest levels of learning as a lasting legacy of their contributions.

## Overview of the School Excellence Framework

The School Excellence Framework identifies fourteen elements which define the core business of excellent schools. The framework provides a holistic view of excellence, acknowledging the interdependencies of learning, teaching and leadership while providing a clear description of quality practice in each of these domains.

The elements of the School Excellence Framework are shown in the following table.

	Elements	Statement of School Excellence
Learning	Learning culture	School culture demonstrates the building of educational aspiration and ongoing performance improvement across its community. Students take responsibility for their ongoing learning.
	Wellbeing	There is a strategic and planned approach to support the cognitive, emotional, social, physical and spiritual wellbeing of all students.
	Curriculum and learning	An integrated approach to quality teaching, curriculum planning and delivery, and assessment promotes learning excellence and responsiveness in meeting the learning needs of all students.
	Assessment and reporting	Consistent, school-wide practices for assessment and reporting across the curriculum are used to monitor, plan and report on student learning across the curriculum.
	Student performance measures	Students consistently perform at high levels on external and internal school performance measures.
Teaching	Effective classroom practice	All teachers are committed to identifying, understanding and implementing the most effective teaching methods, with a high priority given to evidence-based teaching strategies.
	Data skills and use	Student assessment data are regularly used school-wide to identify student achievements and progress, in order to inform future school directions.
	Collaborative practice	There are explicit systems for collaboration and feedback to sustain quality teaching practice.
	Learning and development	Professional learning is aligned with the school plan, and its impact on the quality of teaching and student learning outcomes is evaluated.
	Professional standards	All staff demonstrate personal responsibility for maintaining and developing their professional standards.
Leading	Leadership	The school leadership team supports a culture of high expectations and community engagement, resulting in sustained and measurable whole-school improvement.
	School planning, implementation and reporting	The school plan is at the core of continuous improvement efforts, with the school's vision and strategic directions evident in its main activity.
	School resources	Resources are strategically used to achieve improved student outcomes.
	Management practices and processes	Management systems, structures and processes underpin ongoing school improvement and the professional effectiveness of all school members.