

2021 Annual Report to The School Community



School Name: Vermont South Special School (5025)



- All teachers at the school meet the registration requirements of the Victorian Institute of Teaching (www.vit.vic.edu.au).
- The school meets prescribed minimum standards for registration as regulated by the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) in accordance with the Education and Training Reform (ETR) Act 2006. This includes schools granted an exemption by the VRQA until 31 December 2021 from the minimum standards for student enrolment numbers and/or curriculum framework for school language program.
- The school is compliant with the Child Safe Standards prescribed in Ministerial Order No. 870 – Child Safe Standards, Managing Risk of Child Abuse in School.

Attested on 25 March 2022 at 06:47 AM by Jane Henderson (Principal)

- All teachers employed or engaged by the school council meet the registration requirements of the Victorian Institute of Teaching.
- To the extent that the school council is responsible, the school meets prescribed minimum standards for registration as regulated by the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) in accordance with the Education and Training Reform (ETR) Act 2006. This includes schools granted an exemption by the VRQA until 31 December 2021 from the minimum standards for student enrolment numbers and/or curriculum framework for school language program.
- To the extent that the school council is responsible, the school is compliant with the Child Safe Standards prescribed in Ministerial Order No. 870 – Child Safe Standards, Managing Risk of Child Abuse in School.

Attested on 25 March 2022 at 11:13 AM by Jodi Vale (School Council President)

How to read the Annual Report

What does the *'About Our School'* commentary section of this report refer to?

The 'About our school' commentary provides a brief background on the school, an outline of the school's performance over the year and future directions.

The 'School Context' describes the school's vision, values and purpose. Details include the school's geographic location, size and structure, social characteristics, enrolment characteristics and special programs.

The 'Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO)' section includes the improvement initiatives the school has selected and the progress they have made towards achieving them through the implementation of their School Strategic Plan and Annual Implementation Plan.

What does the *'Performance Summary'* section of this report refer to?

The Performance Summary includes the following:

School Profile

- student enrolment information
- the school's 'Student Family Occupation and Education' category
- a summary of parent responses in the Parent Opinion Survey, shown against the statewide average for Specialist schools
- school staff responses in the area of School Climate in the School Staff Survey, shown against the statewide average for Specialist schools

Achievement

- English and Mathematics for Teacher Judgements against the curriculum

Engagement

Student attendance and engagement at school, including:

- how many exiting students go on to further studies or full-time work

Results are displayed for the latest year and the average of the last four years (where available).

Considering COVID-19 when interpreting the Performance Summary

The Victorian community's experience of COVID-19, including remote and flexible learning, had a significant impact on normal school operations in 2020 and 2021. This impacted the conduct of assessments and surveys. Readers should be aware of this when interpreting the Performance Summary.

For example, in 2020 and 2021 school-based surveys ran under changed circumstances. Absence data may have been influenced by local processes and procedures adopted in response to remote and flexible learning.

Schools should keep this in mind when using this data for planning and evaluation purposes.

How to read the Annual Report (continued)

What does 'NDP' or 'NDA' mean?

'NDP' refers to no data being published for privacy reasons or where there are insufficient underlying data. For example, very low numbers of participants or characteristics that may lead to identification will result in an 'NDP' label.

'NDA' refers to no data being available. Some schools have no data for particular measures due to low enrolments. There may be no students enrolled in some year levels, so school comparisons are not possible.

Note that new schools only have the latest year of data and no comparative data from previous years. The Department also recognises unique circumstances in Specialist, Select Entry, English Language, Community Schools and schools that changed school type recently, where school-to-school comparisons are not appropriate.

What is the 'Towards Foundation Level Victorian Curriculum'?

The Victorian Curriculum is assessed through teacher judgements of student achievement based on classroom learning.

The 'Towards Foundation Level Victorian Curriculum' is integrated directly into the curriculum and is referred to as 'Levels A to D'.

'Levels A to D' may be used for students with disabilities or students who may have additional learning needs

'Levels A to D' are not associated with any set age or year level that links chronological age to cognitive progress (i.e., there is no age expected standard of achievement for 'Levels A to D').

About Our School

School context

Our vision is to empower students to reach their personal best.

Our core values are learning, respect, responsibility, and resilience. We are student centered, we respect ourselves and each other, and understand that our attitudes and behaviours have an impact on the people around us. We are responsible and we take care of our school and the property of others. We are resilient and persistent even when things are difficult.

At Vermont South Special School (VSSS) we are intent on engaging students in their learning through providing highly qualified teaching staff, proactive leadership, and a safe and inclusive environment. It is our mission to provide students with the best possible foundation in life through a well-rounded education. Our school's strategic goals are to improve student achievement in reading and viewing, to maximise student engagement in learning and to strengthen students' sense of inclusion, safety, and wellbeing.

VSSS is located in Vermont South in the Eastern suburbs of Melbourne in an attractive residential area. The school is a primary specialist setting for students with an intellectual disability (Full Scale Intelligence Quotient of between 50 - 70), aged between 5 - 12. Many students also exhibit other diagnosed disabilities and medical conditions, with 65% of students diagnosed on the Autism Spectrum. Students come from seven local government areas and are transported to school by bus. In 2021, 143 students were enrolled, with 2.1% identifying as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and 7% coming from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Our Student Family Occupation and Education Index (SFOE) was 0.4703, which is in the low - medium band. The school had 57 staff members: 2 Principal Class, 27 teachers (FTE 22.06) and 31 Education Support Staff (FTE 21.63).

The school is divided into four sections: Foundation, Juniors, Middles and Seniors. Class sizes are small, ranging from 6 - 7 students in Foundation to 12 - 13 in Seniors. A qualified Special Education teacher, together with a teacher assistant in every class, ensures that students' individual needs are catered for. Students are further supported by specialist subjects; Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Physical Education, and the Healthy Kitchen Program. An occupational therapist, physiotherapist, speech pathologists, nurse and re-engagement officer also support students' additional needs.

We have a holistic approach with high expectations for all students. We maintain a positive, inclusive, respectful, and safe learning environment through the implementation of School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) which builds a positive culture and promotes academic and social success for our students. Our daily assemblies promote a sense of school pride as we celebrate students' efforts and achievements.

Our pedagogy is based on the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model (Fischer & Frey, 2012) and Explicit Instruction (Archer & Hughes, 2011), where students are guided through the learning process, moving from teacher centred whole group delivery to student centred collaboration, and independent practice. Lessons include clear learning intentions, explicit modelling, supported practice and specific feedback. This model allows for targeted teaching that caters for individual needs and supports our focus on the acquisition of early literacy and numeracy skills and improved student outcomes.

Teachers work collaboratively to analyse student and cohort data, developing Individual Education Plans for each student, and units of work based on the Victorian Curriculum. The use of digital technology, concrete materials, and visuals support student learning. Science, camps, excursions, bike education and specialist subjects (visual arts, performing arts, physical education, the Healthy Kitchen Program, occupational therapy, and speech) provide opportunities for students to generalise their skills and develop personal and social capability. Every opportunity is taken to foster a love of learning and support and challenge students to put in a maximum effort.

During 2021 we have worked with the Victorian Schools Building Authority and our architects, GDH Woodhead to

complete various planning stages for the \$10.108 million upgrade and modernisation. Decanting has taken place and demolition and building will begin in Term 2, 2022. This initiative will provide innovative learning spaces for our students.

Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO)

Our 2021 Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) focused on Curriculum Planning and Assessment, Health and Wellbeing and Building Communities from the Framework for Improving Student Outcomes. Our targets and Key Improvement Strategies were designed to address the effects of COVID-19 and lockdown.

Our 2021 target was to prioritise students and staff wellbeing to support learning outcomes and to address the impact of the events of 2020. Key improvement strategies included:

Learning, catch-up and extension priority

The Professional Learning Community (PLC) structure supported teacher collaboration, planning, teacher inquiry into practice and consistent approaches to assessment and monitoring. Two part time tutors were employed to work with students to support them to catch up after 2020 lockdowns. Staff were supported to complete post graduate education.

Happy, active, and healthy kids' priority

There was a strong focus on ensuring that teaching was at the point of need to engage and challenge students. Teaching school expectations and personal social capability lessons contributed to students' sense of inclusion, safety, and wellbeing. The implementation of the Stop, Walk, Talk (SWPBS Bully Prevention) program was introduced and in the Attitudes to School Survey, 93% of students stated that the school is managing bullying and 7% of students were neutral.

Connected Schools

Building a sense of community was a strong focus in 2021. In the Attitudes to School Survey, students' sense of connectedness was 87%, 97% for inclusion, and 92% for emotional awareness and regulation. In addition, 95% of students stated that their teacher cares about them (5% neutral).

Achievement

The school received excellent feedback from the parent and staff opinion surveys. Parent satisfaction results were at 95.3% compared with the state average for specialist schools of 85.2% while the staff opinion survey showed the school's overall score on school climate as 84.9% compared with a state average for specialist schools of 64.9%.

Focused, collaborative planning underpins all programs at VSSS. During 2021, whole school professional learning was delivered focusing on differentiation, visible goals, the Stop, Walk, Talk Program and Team Teach. Professional learning occurred in PLC's through the inquiry process and staff accessed external professional learning including leadership and maths and English courses. There was significant collaboration amongst teachers during this time that resulted in improved online instructional videos. Teachers were not able to participate in onsite peer observations but observed their colleagues' online lessons.

During lockdown teachers used their PLC's to gain a deeper understanding of Science in the Victorian Curriculum, and collaboratively developed sequential science units for year 2 of the science teaching and learning cycle.

Based on feedback from families we refined our online learning program in 2021 to better meet the needs of families. We delivered resource packs and provided videos for English, Maths, Science, Personal and Social Capability, Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Healthy Kitchen, Occupational Therapy and Speech Therapy. Weekly assemblies and creative learning videos were also delivered.

As a Special School setting, all our students are on the Program for Students with Disability (PSD) and have an Individual Education Plan. In 2021, despite lockdown and remote and flexible learning, the majority of students achieved their goals by the end of the year, with some students exceeding their goals.

The school applied for and was successful in obtaining a grant of \$75K for 3 years for OSHC

We continue to refine our assessment practices to ensure that each child is assessed according to their need. As we move forward, we will continue to focus on building teacher capacity to differentiate learning and to provide targeted goals and teaching.

Engagement

Our families come from 41 different postcodes which can cause isolation for parents and carers. In the first half of 2021 we had increased parent participation and community connection, with a number of new events such as parent workshops, Mothers' Day stall and open morning. In the second half of the year due to COVID-19 restrictions we were unable to have onsite events. We ran a modified Athletics Day and Footy Day for students and recorded the School Concert to send home to families. At the end of the year, we were able to have Graduation, a Family Picnic and Carols onsite. These were wonderful celebrations and thoroughly enjoyed by parents, staff, and students.

During remote and flexible learning class Webex meetings provided an opportunity for families to gain an understanding of where their child was in their learning. Families were encouraged to connect through participating in Kahootz, dress up days, pet shows and a spring photo competition. During this time teachers were in regular contact with parents and carers using the medium that suited families best e.g. interpreters, translations, and spoken text. Student Support Group meetings were held online using Webex and this resulted in increased participation. Our Liaison Officer conducted school tours virtually for prospective parents and professionals.

Our focus for the future will be to continue to engage students by:

- Providing targeted teaching at the point of need
 - Continuing SWPBS to support students to follow behaviour expectations
 - Building teacher capacity to differentiate and provide visible goals to help students keep track of their learning and increase their motivation.
-

Wellbeing

Our focus was on the implementation of the 'happy, active and healthy kids priority.'

The SWPBS team continued to drive projects throughout the year to engage students. The team introduced the Stop, Walk, Talk (SWPBS Bully Prevention) program at the beginning of the year. This program provided students and staff with common language when an incident occurs.

During 2021 lockdowns up to 50% of our students attended school as families were experiencing stress. All "at risk" students were welcomed to come to school during lockdowns.

Our small classes enable teachers to have an excellent knowledge of the students in their class. All wellbeing concerns are promptly brought to the attention of leadership for follow up. Referrals for counselling/Child First/ Child Protection/NDIS are made for individual students with acute needs.

The school achieved the bronze level SWPBS implementation status which is a significant achievement. In the 2022 the school will apply for silver level status and utilise Sentral to further document wellbeing referrals.

Finance performance and position

VSSS ended 2021 with a surplus. This was made up from a surplus carried forward from 2020 of and a reduction in expenditure in 2021 due to COVID-19. Strong financial management continued to occur throughout 2021. Additional resources were used to support the online learning and provide basic hands-on materials and basic resource packs to every student. Technology was provided to families without technology. We moved from 14 classes in 2020 to 15

classes in 2021 to support an increased enrolment in the lower part of the school. In 2021, we purchased a new 25-seater bus to replace the bus that was sold in 2020.

The leadership team, with the support of the Business Manager continued to ensure that the school facilities have been well maintained and refreshed for when students returned after lockdown. Equity funding of \$33,832 was partly used to support a re-engagement officer.

We do not charge school fees, but a voluntary parent contribution continued in 2021 to support a range of programs.

As we look to the future our aim is to continue to build enrolments, particularly in the lower part of the school. It is pleasing to report that we have begun 2022 with an additional class, taking our total to 16 classes.

\$10.108 million has been allocated to our school for an upgrade and modernisation. During 2021 we worked closely with the Victorian Building Authority and our architects, GHD Woodhead to complete various planning stages. The contractors have now been appointed and demolition and building will begin in Term 2, 2022. The project is due to be completed in by the end of 2023. This upgrade will make a significant difference to the facilities of our school and our students' learning.

For more detailed information regarding our school please visit our website at <https://www.vermont-south-ss.vic.edu.au>

Performance Summary

The Performance Summary for government schools provides an overview of how this school is contributing to the objectives of the Education State and how it compares to other Victorian government schools.

All schools work in partnership with their school community to improve outcomes for children and young people. Sharing this information with parents and the wider school community helps to support community engagement in student learning, a key priority of the Framework for Improving Student Outcomes.

Refer to the 'How to read the Annual Report' section for help on how to interpret this report.

SCHOOL PROFILE

Enrolment Profile

A total of 131 students were enrolled at this school in 2021, 44 female and 87 male.

7 percent of students had English as an additional language and NDP percent were Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

Overall Socio-Economic Profile

The overall school's socio-economic profile is based on the school's Student Family Occupation and Education index (SFOE).

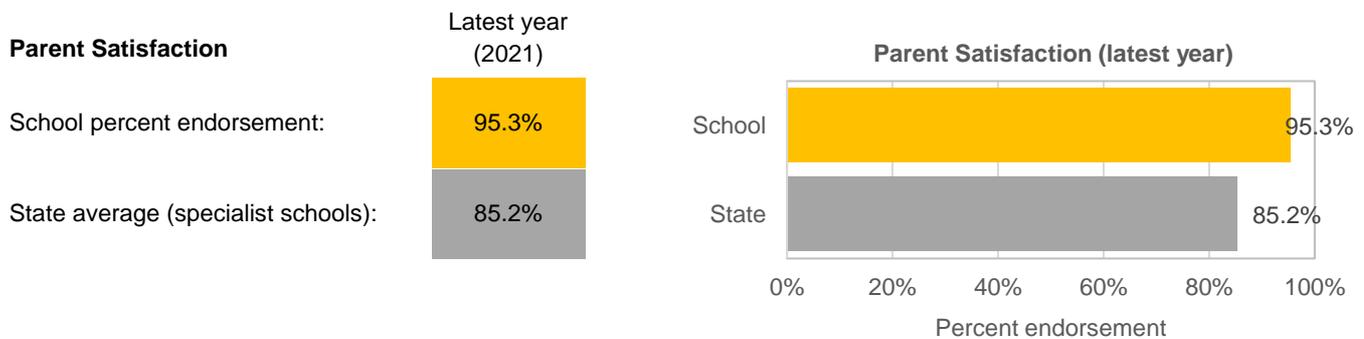
SFOE is a measure of socio-educational disadvantage of a school, based on educational and employment characteristics of the parents/carers of students enrolled at the school. Possible SFOE band values are: Low, Low-Medium, Medium and High. A 'Low' band represents a low level of socio-educational disadvantage, a 'High' band represents a high level of socio-educational disadvantage.

This school's SFOE band value is: Low - Medium

Parent Satisfaction Summary

The percent endorsement by parents on their school satisfaction level, as reported in the annual Parent Opinion Survey.

Percent endorsement indicates the percent of positive responses (agree or strongly agree) from parents who responded to the survey.

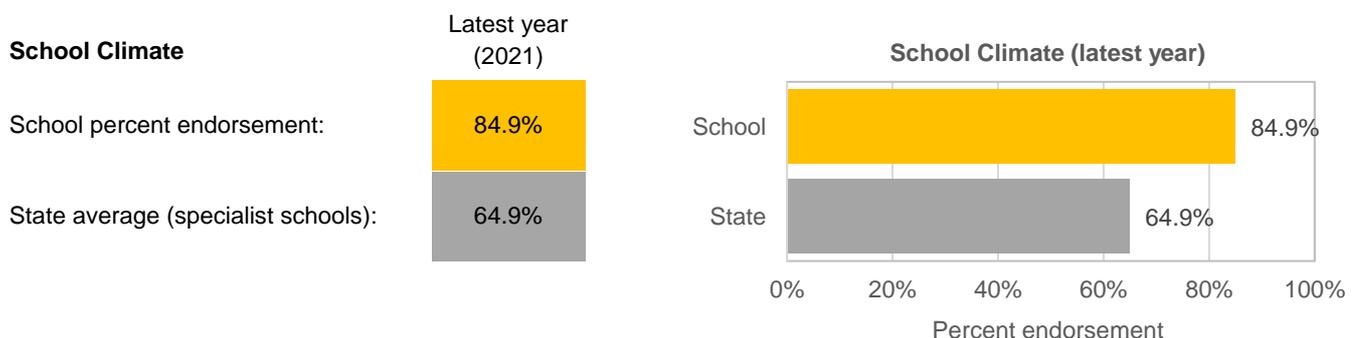


School Staff Survey

The percent endorsement by staff on School Climate, as reported in the annual School Staff Survey.

Percent endorsement indicates the percent of positive responses (agree or strongly agree) from staff who responded to the survey.

Data is suppressed for schools with three or less respondents to the survey for confidentiality reasons.



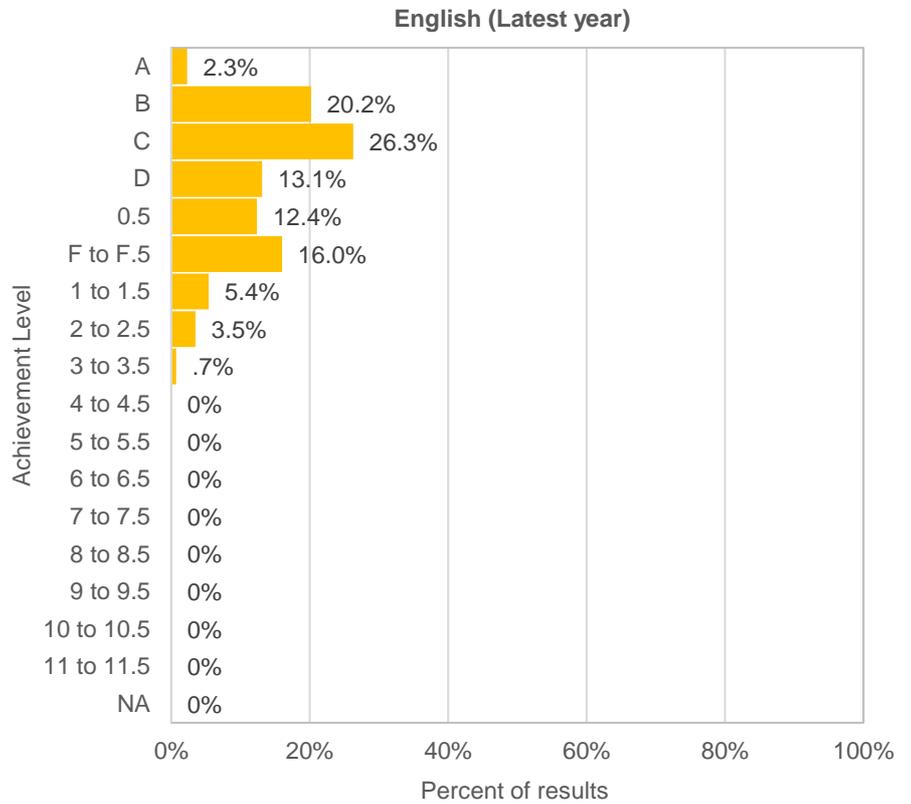
ACHIEVEMENT

Teacher Judgement of student achievement

Percent of results at each achievement level in English and Mathematics.

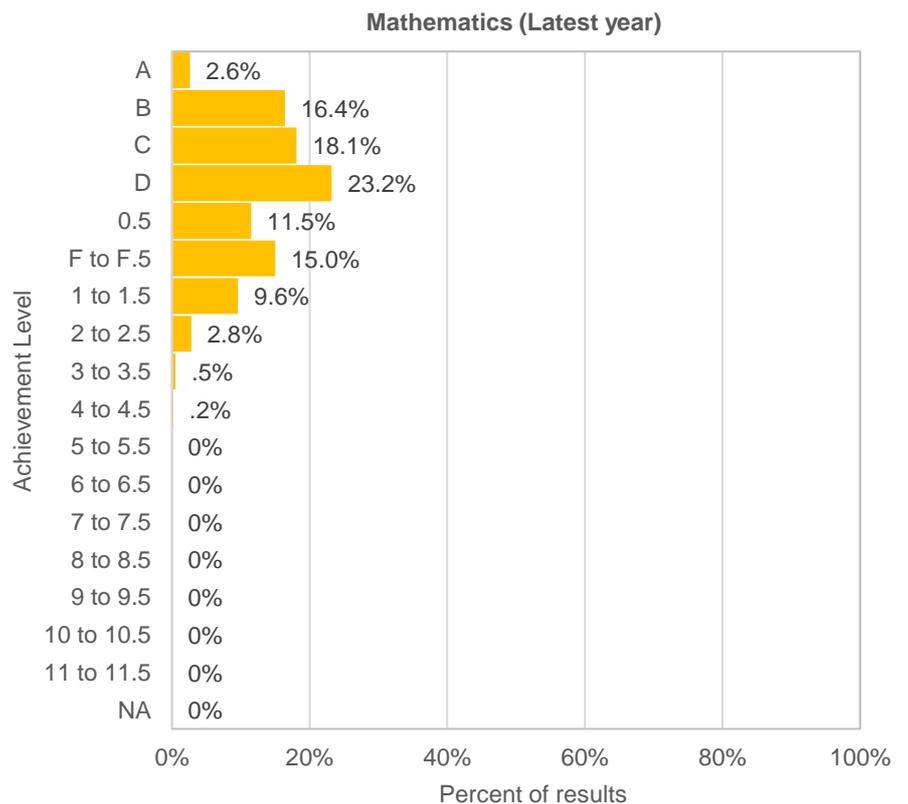
English

Achievement Level	Latest year (2021)
A	2.3%
B	20.2%
C	26.3%
D	13.1%
0.5	12.4%
F to F.5	16.0%
1 to 1.5	5.4%
2 to 2.5	3.5%
3 to 3.5	0.7%
4 to 4.5	NDA
5 to 5.5	NDA
6 to 6.5	NDA
7 to 7.5	NDA
8 to 8.5	NDA
9 to 9.5	NDA
10 to 10.5	NDA
11 to 11.5	NDA
NA	NDA



Mathematics

Achievement Level	Latest year (2021)
A	2.6%
B	16.4%
C	18.1%
D	23.2%
0.5	11.5%
F to F.5	15.0%
1 to 1.5	9.6%
2 to 2.5	2.8%
3 to 3.5	0.5%
4 to 4.5	0.2%
5 to 5.5	NDA
6 to 6.5	NDA
7 to 7.5	NDA
8 to 8.5	NDA
9 to 9.5	NDA
10 to 10.5	NDA
11 to 11.5	NDA
NA	NDA



ENGAGEMENT

Average Number of Student Absence Days

Absence from school can impact on students' learning. Common reasons for non-attendance include illness and extended family holidays. Absence data in 2020 and 2021 may have been influenced by COVID-19.

Student Absence	2018	2019	2020	2021	4-year average
School average number of absence days:	21.3	19.2	18.0	16.1	18.8

Students exiting to further studies or full-time employment

Percentage of students going on to further studies or full-time employment.

Note: This measure refers to data from the previous calendar year. Data excludes destinations recorded as 'Unknown'.

Student Exits	2018	2019	2020	2021	4-year average
School percent of students with positive destinations:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Financial Performance and Position

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE - OPERATING STATEMENT SUMMARY FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 DECEMBER, 2021

Revenue	Actual
Student Resource Package	\$5,649,596
Government Provided DET Grants	\$787,164
Government Grants Commonwealth	\$2,982
Government Grants State	\$4,400
Revenue Other	\$6,000
Locally Raised Funds	\$75,548
Capital Grants	\$0
Total Operating Revenue	\$6,525,690

Equity ¹	Actual
Equity (Social Disadvantage)	\$33,832
Equity (Catch Up)	\$0
Transition Funding	\$0
Equity (Social Disadvantage – Extraordinary Growth)	\$0
Equity Total	\$33,832

Expenditure	Actual
Student Resource Package ²	\$4,897,040
Adjustments	\$0
Books & Publications	\$0
Camps/Excursions/Activities	\$21,551
Communication Costs	\$6,366
Consumables	\$78,759
Miscellaneous Expense ³	\$14,196
Professional Development	\$11,182
Equipment/Maintenance/Hire	\$57,617
Property Services	\$172,382
Salaries & Allowances ⁴	\$257,959
Support Services	\$7,710
Trading & Fundraising	\$48,093
Motor Vehicle Expenses	\$11,819
Travel & Subsistence	\$0
Utilities	\$37,399
Total Operating Expenditure	\$5,622,073
Net Operating Surplus/-Deficit	\$903,617
Asset Acquisitions	\$159,220

- (1) The equity funding reported above is a subset of the overall revenue reported by the school.
- (2) Student Resource Package Expenditure figures are as of 25 Feb 2022 and are subject to change during the reconciliation process.
- (3) Miscellaneous Expenses include bank charges, administration expenses, insurance and taxation charges.
- (4) Salaries and Allowances refers to school-level payroll.

FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2021

Funds available	Actual
High Yield Investment Account	\$461,630
Official Account	\$39,419
Other Accounts	\$0
Total Funds Available	\$501,049

Financial Commitments	Actual
Operating Reserve	\$98,312
Other Recurrent Expenditure	\$13,061
Provision Accounts	\$0
Funds Received in Advance	\$0
School Based Programs	\$31,000
Beneficiary/Memorial Accounts	\$0
Cooperative Bank Account	\$0
Funds for Committees/Shared Arrangements	\$0
Repayable to the Department	\$0
Asset/Equipment Replacement < 12 months	\$107,400
Capital - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months	\$20,000
Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months	\$125,000
Asset/Equipment Replacement > 12 months	\$0
Capital - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months	\$0
Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months	\$0
Total Financial Commitments	\$394,773

All funds received from the Department, or raised by the school, have been expended, or committed to subsequent years, to support the achievement of educational outcomes and other operational needs of the school, consistent with Department policies, School Council approvals and the intent/purposes for which funding was provided or raised.