

2025 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 \(VIT\)](#)
- the school meets prescribed Minimum Standards for registration as regulated by the Victorian Regulation and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) in accordance with the [Education and Training Reform Act 2006 \(Vic\)](#) (this includes any exemption granted to this school by the VRQA, for the most recent calendar year, in relation to minimum student enrolment numbers and/or the curriculum framework requirement to deliver a languages program)
- the school meets the requirements of the Child Safe Standards as prescribed in [Ministerial Order 1359 – Implementing the Child Safe Standards – Managing the risk of child abuse in schools \(PDF\)](#).

Attested on 13 April 2026 at 11:36 AM by Jane Henderson (Principal)

- As executive officer of the school council, I attest that this 2025 Annual Report to the School Community has been tabled and endorsed at a meeting of the school council and will be publicly shared with the school community.

Attested on 22 April 2026 at 12:47 PM by Jane Henderson (Principal)

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 and an overview of the school's performance over the previous calendar year.

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 'Progress towards strategic goals, student outcomes, and student engagement' section allows schools to reflect on highlights related to implementation of and progress towards the School Strategic Plan and Annual Implementation Plan, and efforts to improve student learning, wellbeing, and engagement.

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
 - responses to the General Satisfaction area of the Parent/Caregiver/Guardian Opinion Survey
 - school staff responses to the School Climate area of the School Staff Survey
- Learning
 - English for Teacher Judgements against the curriculum
 - Mathematics for Teacher Judgements against the curriculum
- Engagement
 - how many exiting students go on to further studies or full-time work
 - average absence days per student
 - student attendance rate

Key terms used in the Performance Summary are defined below:

NDP and NDA

'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

Vermont South Special School is a centre of excellence located in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne. The school is a primary specialist setting for students with an intellectual disability (Full Scale IQ between 50 - 70) with many students also exhibiting other diagnosed disabilities and medical conditions. Our students come from seven local government areas and are transported to school by bus. We liaise closely with Heatherwood School where many of our students transition for their secondary education.

Our vision at Vermont South Special School is to empower students to reach their personal best and it is our mission to provide students with the best possible foundation in life through a well-rounded education. Our strategic goals are to maximise student learning growth and wellbeing. Our values are learning, respect, responsibility, and resilience.

In 2025, 147 students were enrolled, with 9% identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and 10% coming from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Our Student Family Occupation and Education Index (SFOE) was 0.3534, meaning the school had a low to medium level of disadvantage compared to other schools. The school had 69 staff members consisting of 2 Principal class, 28 teachers (FTE 23.48) and 39 Educational Support Staff (FTE 30.22).

At Vermont South Special School, students learn in a calm, supportive and inclusive environment. We follow the Victorian Curriculum 2.0 and use an evidence-based teaching model, where students are guided through the learning process. Students are provided with explicit instruction and opportunities to work both collaboratively and independently. Our students learn best through visuals, hands on materials and specific feedback. Students' interests are incorporated in their learning, and they are encouraged to reflect on and articulate their thinking. All students have an Individual Education Plan. Interactive goals enable students to track their progress and feel a sense of empowerment and achievement. Literacy and numeracy skills are a priority and are developed through targeted small group teaching at each student's point of need. Students also enjoy a range of specialist subjects; Science, Library, Performing Arts, Visual Arts, Physical Education and the Healthy Kitchen Garden Program.

Throughout 2025, an occupational therapist, physiotherapist, speech pathologists, nurses and 4 Wellbeing Support staff also supported students' additional needs.

At VSSS we take every opportunity to celebrate and foster a love of learning.

Progress towards strategic goals, student outcomes and student engagement

Learning

2025 survey results were at a high level with a 96% positive endorsement for 'Parent Satisfaction' in the Parent/Carer/Guardian Opinion Survey compared with similar schools of 89.2%. Positive endorsement for 'School Climate' in the School Staff Survey was 88.2% compared with similar schools of 72.8%. In addition, positive endorsement for 'Differentiated Learning Challenge' in the Students Attitudes to School Survey was 93% compared to 89% for similar schools. These exceptional results reflect the strong culture at Vermont South Special School and our focus on continuous improvement.

In 2025 we implemented the Department of Education's Phonics and Structured Literacy lessons across the school. To support the roll out of this initiative we provided professional learning on the teaching of reading and a Demonstration Day where teachers observed the English Learning Specialist model structured literacy lessons. A significant number of decodable readers were purchased and hands on resources were created to further support the lessons. Professional learning was provided on teaching writing and how to support students by using hands on resources and differentiated writing templates. All planning documents were updated to reflect the new English and Maths Victorian Curriculum 2.0 and whole school moderation in maths and writing were conducted. PLC inquiries focused on structured literacy, writing and student voice related to receiving feedback. In addition, a teacher completed the Teaching Excellence Program at the Academy of Teaching and Leadership to further build leadership capability.

'Towards Foundation Level Victorian Curriculum' provides students with special needs access to Levels A to D content descriptors and standards. These levels focus on progressing students from pre-intentional to intentional engagement in learning and supporting them to develop independence as they progress towards the learning described at the Foundation level. In English, teacher judgment of student achievement placed 60% of students between level A-D, 37% between levels 0.5 – 1.5 and 2.8% between year 2 and halfway through year 3. In maths, teacher judgment of student achievement placed 49.6 % of students between level A-D, 49% between levels 0.5 – 1.5 and 1.4% between year 2 and halfway through year 3. These are indeed exceptional results!

Wellbeing

Student wellbeing continued to be a priority in 2025. As a School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) gold accredited school, we continued to provide a consistent, positive, equitable and safe learning environment where all students could thrive. The Personal and Social Capabilities curriculum was explicitly taught with sequenced lessons focusing on following our school expectations and routines as well as developing self-awareness and regulation skills. The 'Stop, Walk, Talk' antibullying program supported students to have agency in overcoming social problems through the steps of saying or indicating "stop", walking away and seeking help. Students also participated in a range of activities during the National Day of Action against

Bullying and Violence. The Student Attitudes to school survey indicated a 90% positive endorsement for 'Managing Bullying' compared to 84% for similar schools.

In 2025, we implemented a new Wellbeing Support initiative to better support our students, particularly those facing difficulties with engagement and emotional regulation. This initiative has seen an additional education support staff member employed within each section of the school to allow for a dedicated Wellbeing Support staff member to be available each day to provide individualised support for students who require it. The Wellbeing Support program is designed to be flexible and responsive to the everchanging needs of the school. Utilising Compass, we have been able to analyse student behaviour data to identify students requiring the assistance of the wellbeing support staff member as well as pinpointing exact times or lessons in which particular students are needing support. This proactive initiative has been well received. Data has indicated that the majority of students engaged in the program have had a reduction in the number of behaviour incidents.

A range of lunchtime clubs continued to be offered. Additional supports also included small group and individual sessions with the occupational therapist and physiotherapist to develop play skills and functional communication.

A trained therapy dog handler with her therapy dog, Harriet, continued to be employed two days a week in 2025 to support student wellbeing. Identified students had scheduled time with Harriet each week to further support their wellbeing and engagement.

These initiatives all combined to support student wellbeing and learning.

Engagement

The school continued to focus on increasing school attendance in 2025. Attendance awards were given out weekly at assemblies, families were followed up and support was provided to address school refusal and attendance barriers. In 2025, our average absence days per student was 24.5 which is a pleasing result compared to similar schools with an average of 39.6 days and a state average of 40 days. The average proportion of formal school days students in each year level attended was 87.6%. It was pleasing to note that 41% of our students' attendance was 95% or higher compared to 20% for similar schools. In 2025, we had 24% of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cohort attend 95% or more compared to 18% for similar schools.

Student Support Group meetings were held three times throughout the year focusing on developing an Individual Education Plan for each student, communicating progress and addressing each student's specific needs. Numerous care team meetings were held to support students in out of home care and students with complex needs.

The 2025 Parent Opinion Survey results showed a 91% positive endorsement for 'Student Connectedness' compared to 89% for similar schools. Additionally, there was a 95% positive endorsement for school communication compared to 90% for similar schools. Events held throughout the year were aimed at increasing the partnership between parents and the school. Events included Harmony Night and family picnic, Mothers' Day and Fathers' Day open mornings, Book Week activities, swimming and gymnastics programs, athletics, carols and family picnic and graduation.

Our focus on student voice and agency in 2025 provided leadership opportunities for 16 students. Each term graduating students present a leadership speech and new leaders were elected

including School Leaders, Sustainability Captains and Sports Captains. School leaders also had the opportunity to make a scarecrow for the kitchen garden at Government House, tour the state rooms and meet the Governor of Victoria. They also played a prominent role in school assemblies, leading the acknowledgement of Country and handing out awards.

Camps, excursions, sporting clinics together with the bike education, shopping, canteen and recycling programs were just some of the opportunities offered in 2025 to support students to generalise their learning, build confidence and increase their engagement. The 2025 Student Attitudes to School Survey indicated a positive endorsement of 91% for students' 'Sense of Confidence' compared to the state average of 81%.

Other highlights from the school year

Our Biannual School Concert, 'A Night at the Museum' was held at Crossways and was an amazing celebration of acting, dancing and creativity that brought the whole school community together. We had bugs, dinosaurs, skeletons, mummies, the Titanic, the Loch Ness Monster and so much more. It was wonderful to have John Mullahy, the State Member for Glen Waverley and Richard Welch Member for the North-Eastern Metropolitan Region attend the event.

In 2025, we transitioned over to using Compass as our school management system. This has seen significant improvements to many facets of school operations. A particular highlight has been the improved collection and analysis of student behaviour and attendance data. This has allowed us to make well informed decisions on how best to support our students that are backed by accurate and real-time data.

Financial performance

Vermont South Special School ended the year in a sound financial position resulting in a surplus of \$537,022. All funds received from the Department or raised by the school have been expended or committed to subsequent years to support the educational outcomes and other operational needs of the school; consistent with Department policies and the priority initiatives identified by the School Council. Funds were used to refurbish the senior classrooms and build new offices in the Administration building, extend seating in the courtyard, improve paths in the inclusive playground and across the school and install fencing. In addition, interactive tv's and new furniture was purchased for foundation and junior buildings.

Equity funding was used to support tier 3 students. The casual relief budget enabled teachers to be released for planning, assessments, professional development, and to cover absences due to leave and illness. The Sporting Schools grants were used to run a range of sporting clinics, and the Out of Hours School Care grant was used to deliver the holiday program until the end of term 2 holidays.

**For more detailed information regarding our school please visit our website at
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 2.0 (FISO 2.0).

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 139 students were enrolled at this school in 2025, 40 female and 99 male. 9% had English as an additional language and 8% 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 percentage endorsement by parents on their General School Satisfaction, as reported in the annual Parent/Caregiver/Guardian Opinion Survey. Percent endorsement indicates the percent of positive responses (agree or strongly agree) from parents who responded to the survey.

		2025	
% positive endorsement General School Satisfaction (Parent/Caregiver/Guardian Opinion Survey)	School	96.0%	
	Similar schools	89.2%	
	State	86.9%	

School Staff Survey

The percentage endorsement by staff on School Climate, as reported in the annual School Staff Survey. Percentage endorsement indicates the percent of positive responses (agree or strongly agree) from staff who responded to the survey.

		2025	
% positive endorsement School Climate (School Staff Survey)	School	88.2%	
	Similar schools	72.8%	
	State	68.0%	

LEARNING

Teacher Judgement of student achievement English

Percent of results at each achievement level in English

		2025	
A	School	2.8%	
B	School	14.3%	
C	School	21.6%	
D	School	21.4%	
0.5	School	16.1%	
F-F.5	School	15.9%	
1.0-1.5	School	5.3%	
2.0-2.5	School	2.8%	
3.0-3.5	School	0.0%	
4.0-4.5	School	0.0%	
5.0-5.5	School	0.0%	
6.0-6.5	School	0.0%	
7.0-7.5	School	0.0%	
8.0-8.5	School	0.0%	
9.0-9.5	School	0.0%	
10.0-10.5	School	0.0%	
11.0-11.5	School	0.0%	
N/A	School	0.0%	

Teacher Judgement of student achievement Mathematics

Percent of results at each achievement level in Mathematics

		2025	
A	School	0.0%	
B	School	8.3%	
C	School	19.3%	
D	School	22.1%	
0.5	School	15.2%	
F-F.5	School	21.4%	

			2025
1.0-1.5	School	12.4%	
2.0-2.5	School	1.4%	
3.0-3.5	School	0.0%	
4.0-4.5	School	0.0%	
5.0-5.5	School	0.0%	
6.0-6.5	School	0.0%	
7.0-7.5	School	0.0%	
8.0-8.5	School	0.0%	
9.0-9.5	School	0.0%	
10.0-10.5	School	0.0%	
11.0-11.5	School	0.0%	
N/A	School	0.0%	

ENGAGEMENT

Students exiting to further studies or full-time employment

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

		2024	4-year average
% of students exiting to further studies or full-time employment	School	NDP	40.7%
	Similar schools	42.5%	40.4%
	State	81.5%	81.2%

Average absence days per student

Absence from school can impact on students’ learning. Common reasons for non-attendance include illness and extended family holidays.

		2025	4-year average
Ungraded	School	24.5	24.9
	Similar schools	39.6	39.6
	State	40.0	39.6

Attendance rate

Attendance rate refers to the average proportion of formal school days students in each year level attended.

		2025
Ungraded	School	87.6%

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE AND POSITION

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE - OPERATING STATEMENT SUMMARY FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 DECEMBER 2025

Financial figures are as of 19 March 2026.

Revenue	Actual
Student Resource Package	\$5,915,083
Government Provided DET Grants	\$1,896,597
Government Grants Commonwealth	\$0
Government Grants State	\$0
Revenue Other	\$22,583
Locally Raised Funds	\$132,172
Capital Grants	\$0
Total Operating Revenue	\$7,966,435

Equity	Actual
Equity (Social Disadvantage)	\$44,525
Equity (Catch Up)	\$0
Equity (Social Disadvantage - Extraordinary Growth)	\$0
Equity Total	\$44,525

The equity funding reported above is a subset of the overall revenue reported by the school.

Expenditure	Actual
Student Resource Package ¹	\$5,971,671
Adjustments	(\$27,942)
Books & Publications	\$202
Camps/Excursions/Activities	\$55,828
Communication Costs	\$9,124
Consumables	\$116,281
Miscellaneous Expenses ²	\$24,372
Agency Staff	\$14,092
Professional Development	\$25,221
Equipment/Maintenance/Hire	\$229,527
Property Services	\$254,630
Salaries & Allowances ³	\$574,085
Support Services	\$18,989

Expenditure	Actual
Trading & Fundraising	\$83,803
Motor Vehicle Expenses	\$13,237
Travel & Subsistence	\$357
Utilities	\$65,933
Total Operating Expenditure	\$7,429,412
Net Operating Surplus/-Deficit	\$537,022
Asset Acquisitions	\$355,032

¹ Student Resource Package Expenditure figures are subject to change during the reconciliation process.

² Miscellaneous Expenses include bank charges, administration expenses, insurance and taxation charges.

³ Salaries and Allowances refers to school-level payroll.

FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2025

Funds Available	Actual
High Yield Investment Account	\$557,704
Official Account	\$71,939
Other Accounts	\$0
Total Funds Available	\$629,643

Financial Commitments	Actual
Operating Reserve	\$247,614
Other Recurrent Expenditure	\$7,902
Provision Accounts	\$0
Funds Received in Advance	\$0
School Based Programs	\$11,525
Beneficiary/Memorial Accounts	\$0
Cooperative Bank Account	\$0
Funds for Committees/Shared Arrangements	\$0
Repayable to the Department	\$0
Asset/Equipment Replacement < 12 months	\$0
Capital - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months	\$0
Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months	\$350,000
Asset/Equipment Replacement > 12 months	\$0
Capital - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months	\$0
Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months	\$0
Total Financial Commitments	\$617,041

All funds received from the Department of Education, 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.