

2019 Annual Report to The School Community



School Name: Western English Language School (8838)



WESTERN ENGLISH LANGUAGE SCHOOL

- 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 2019 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 2020 at 02:46 PM by Yolette Dezilwa (Principal)

The 2019 Annual Report to the school community:

- has been tabled and endorsed at a meeting of the school council
- will be publicly shared with the school community.

Attested on 31 March 2020 at 07:06 AM by Denis Margetic (School Council President)

About Our School

School context

WELS School Vision

WELS empowers students to develop the practical and academic language skills needed in mainstream settings within a safe and supportive environment. Our vision is underpinned by respect, responsibility and caring as well as community connections.

WELS values

Respect - Respect denotes both a positive feeling of esteem for a person and also specific actions and conducts representative of that esteem. Respect can be defined as allowing yourself and others to do and be their best. It is the goal of WELS to create a mutually respectful atmosphere between all individuals involved within our school including students, parents, administrators, teachers, staff members & visitors. As such, all entities are expected to remain respectful to each other at all times. Students and teachers especially are expected to greet each other with kind words and student/teacher exchanges should be friendly, in an appropriate tone, and should remain respectful. The majority of student/teacher interaction should be positive.

Responsibility - WELS understands that each student has the right to learn in a comfortable environment that is happy, safe, and secure. The best educational opportunities exist when an appropriate school environment is maintained. The staff at WELS recognise the need to uphold consistent expectations and procedures throughout the school. These procedures are in place to guide students toward a more responsible and self-disciplined role in our school environment.

All school staff have a responsibility for the provision of quality teaching. Staff must take reasonable care to avoid harm to students. They have a duty of care. This includes teachers, administrators, canteen staff, casual relief staff and volunteers.

Staff and students demonstrate responsible behaviours in the corridors, classrooms, library, canteen, play areas, toilets, at the bus stop and in the community.

Caring - Students and staff demonstrate caring by helping people, thinking about other people, sharing with others and accepting others for who they are.

Purpose and History of the School

The Western English Language School (WELS) provides newly arrived students in the metropolitan area of the South-West Victoria Region with their first experience of an Australian school. WELS was established in 2000 in order to teach English as an Additional Language to newly arrived students. These cohorts include migrant, refugee and international students aged between five and eighteen years of age. The school has six sites across Victoria, located in Braybrook, Wyndham, Footscray, St Albans, Laverton and Manor Lakes.

Students at WELS come from a range of countries. At any one time, over 50 different nationalities could be represented in the school's enrolments. WELS enrolls Year 1 to Year 10 students within six months of their arrival in Australia and Foundation students within 18 months. Students arrive on a variety of visas and they may be equivalently schooled or have interrupted or no prior schooling (disrupted or discontinued for two or more years).

EAL students follow a pathway of English learning that is different from students for whom English is their first language. The rate of EAL learning is influenced by many factors including; age, previous education, prior literacy and migration experiences. They are likely to take five to ten years to learn English for academic purposes to the same level as students who have been learning English all their lives.

WELS teachers have specialist qualifications in teaching English as an Additional Language. These qualifications, supplemented by a strong program of professional development, equip teachers to teach the English language and the literacy and cultural understandings necessary for students to participate in mainstream settings and in the wider community. Staff participate in professional development on the cultural backgrounds of various cohorts, particularly in regards to how these backgrounds influence student settlement and learning.

Multicultural Education Aides (MEAs) are staff whose main responsibility is supporting EAL students in their learning by explaining concepts or instructions in their first language as well as providing additional support for all students. Due to their own experiences and community connections, MEAs are instrumental in establishing and maintaining links with newly arrived families.

Education Support staff and a number of volunteers are also an integral part of supporting students.

Facilities

WELS is a multi-campus school comprising five campuses and an outpost, situated in high-settlement areas of newly arrived families.

- The largest campus is the F-10 Campus in Braybrook with capacity for 13 secondary and six primary classes (total of 247 students). The F-10 Campus is the administrative hub of the school. Facilities include a library, gymnasium, science laboratory, computer room, home economics room and canteen.
- A three-class primary campus at Footscray operates within the Footscray City Primary School with access to the school's facilities (total of 39 students).
- A three-class primary campus at Laverton operates in purpose-built classrooms on the grounds of the Laverton College P-12 with access to the school's facilities (total of 39 students).
- The four-class primary outpost at St Albans is situated on the grounds of St Albans Primary School and has a purpose-built facility to house the new arrivals classes in St Albans and surrounding suburbs. Students at this outpost have access to the school's facilities (total of 52 students)
- The Manor Lakes F-6 campus is situated on the grounds of Manor Lakes College and has a purpose-built facility for new arrival classes in Manor Lakes and surrounding suburbs. The campus can accommodate 10 primary classes with capacity for six secondary classes (total of 208).
- The Wyndham secondary campus is situated on the grounds of Wyndham Central College and has a purpose-built facility to cater for new arrivals classes in Werribee and surrounding suburbs. The campus can accommodate eight secondary classes (total of 104 students).
- A Primary online EAL program operated in 2019.

Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO)

The FISO area that WELS has targeted in the four year School Strategic Plan and 2019 Annual Implementation Plan is: "By 2022, the school's FISO ranking in priority 'Excellence in Teaching and Learning' in the dimension 'Evidenced-based high-impact teaching strategies' will be at or above the Embedding stage".

The related 12-month target is that: "The school will assess itself as meeting the FISO criterion: 'Teachers demonstrate the confidence and skills to talk about quality teaching. They question their impact through analysing various data, are open to having their teaching reviewed, and are welcoming and responsive to helpful and constructive feedback.'

In order to for teachers to confidently talk about quality teaching and meaningful data for newly arrived EAL students at WELS, the following work began within the primary and secondary sectors:

Highlight 1

FISO Priority: Excellence in Teaching and Learning Dimension: Curriculum planning and assessment
Secondary Sector

In 2019, the secondary sector at WELS focused on developing the lower-levels and Practical English parts of our curriculum through the establishment of two focus groups.

The lower-levels focus group's aim was to define what is meant by 'lower levels', including beginning the development of a lower-levels handbook – a guide for teachers to teaching these students of very low language ability and who have often had little to no prior schooling. Discussions allowed us to crystalise exactly what – and how much of it – should be in the lower levels' curriculum. We conducted two trials: one with the lowest level (SL) and one with the next level up (SP), and the findings from these revealed what worked, didn't work and what would subsequently become key principles of these levels' curriculum going forward:

- a focus on the simple sentence as the core form of writing done through the context granted by a simple genre
- a significant portion of class time spent explicitly focusing on developing macro-skills, in particular phonics and handwriting
- shorter, more regularly repeated lessons rather than longer doubles

- as few teachers as possible to share a low class

Concurrently, the Practical English focus group's aim was to determine which non-academic learnings are most important for our students to learn before they transition beyond WELS.

Collaborative work on this area has allowed us to:

- define Practical English as "Practical English is the skills and strategies required to independently negotiate everyday situations in order to access and engage with people, places and services."
- decide on eight core topics (personal information, engaging with school, time, money, getting around, health services, places in our community, pathways)
- develop a Practical English Guide, whose purpose is to explain what the new Practical English curriculum is and how it works in practice
- develop a comprehensive Practical English Scope & Sequence, which maps out all the targets, language foci, skill & concept foci, suggested assessment and resources a teacher needs in order to teach a Practical English unit, and
- plan the development of six Practical English model units, which would be developed in T1 2020

WELS' vision is to "develop the practical and academic language skills needed in mainstream settings within a safe and supportive environment."

By developing the Practical English curriculum, we have been able to pin down and guarantee the provision of these key learnings to our students – something that was only occurring haphazardly in the past. We look forward to sharing the draft curriculum with staff early in 2020 in order to get on-the-ground feedback from more experts in teaching EAL students, to begin trialling the new Scope & Sequence, and to continue to refine our curriculum with the aim of ensuring that what we provide to our students is the highest possible caliber of both academic and practical learning.

Primary Sector

In 2019, in the WELS Primary sector, we focused improved our curriculum and delivery by:

- Developing new Foundation units of work which meet the specific developmental needs of this age group. Previously, our early years units spanned Foundation to year two. Our new Foundation units provide a greater focus on developmental writing and oral language, while year one to two units focus more on genre writing.
- Collecting baseline reading data. This data will allow us to measure improvements in student reading levels as we improve our reading program in the next three years.
- Purchasing reading resources, including new home reading books, benchmark kits and guided reading sets.
- Introducing consistent, regular benchmark testing of reading.
- Developing and introducing a WELS' Maths scope and sequence to ensure differentiated teaching and consistency of topic delivery across sites.
- Developing our primary curriculum website to include our units of work and core curriculum documents. Our units are detailed, include quality, highly engaging student resources and are flexible enough to be tailored to the needs of individual classes. The website gives teachers access to units and documents from home and presents resources in a much more accessible format.
- Extending our induction program for new primary teachers to 2 terms. An extensive pack of teacher documents and resources has also been developed and pre- and post- induction surveys have been created. Initial responses to the surveys have shown significant teacher growth.

Highlight 2

FISO Priority: Excellence in Teaching and Learning Dimension: Building Practice Excellence

KIS 3a - Foster a collaborative learning environment across the school and within school sites

In 2019, WELS has achieved our 12-month target for this KIS - "68% or more of teachers will positively endorse the time to share pedagogical knowledge" in the Staff Survey. WELS achieved 70%.

In the primary sector where staff are spread over six WELS sites. One way in which we achieved this was to improve our PLC meeting structure and processes. This included adopting ATLAS meeting agendas and developing staff ability to follow and use these. We also organised PLCs according to year level groups so that teachers could collaborate with peers from other sites who teach a similar cohort. We concurrently developed data charts to compare start and end-of-term student data. At the same time, we developed staff capability in measuring and improving student use of specific grammatical features.

Achievement

Highlight 3

FISO Priority: Excellence in Teaching and Learning

Dimension: Curriculum Planning and Assessment

One of WELS' 2019-2022 SSP goals for the primary and secondary sectors is the redevelopment of the purpose-built WELS Assessment Tool.

This was set as a goal in order to improve the validity, reliability, usefulness and usability of teacher assessments of students' progress at WELS. With improvements in these areas, teachers will be better able to target teaching to our students' needs, thereby improving our students' achievement.

The new online assessment tool we are devising – the English Language & Literacy Assessment (ELLA) – will contain separate assessments for speaking & listening, reading & viewing and writing.

Over 2019, we developed a proof of concept for the writing component as well as extensive instructions on the architecture, functioning and calculations for how the new assessment system should look, work, analyse and represent student achievement. The writing component is composed of two parts: the Language & Literacy Levels (LLs) and also the WELS-developed Foundations for Writing Continuum (FWC). The Foundations for Writing Continuum maps out those basic, core skills that students require to actually begin writing, something that had always been a gap in our previous writing assessments.

In addition to incorporating the Foundations for Writing Continuum into the English Language & Literacy Assessment tool, we reworked an updated Literacy Levels document and heavily edited the text structure progressions for each of our 24 genres in preparation for uploading to the English Language & Literacy Assessments tool.

This was due to teacher feedback identifying that the indicators for assessing the schematic structure of genres was vague and subjective. The process of editing and expanding on the details allowed us to ensure that each genre's levels were distinguishable from one another. This has led to an increase in cross-teacher consistency in the way that we assess this core language feature and teachers have expressed that they are looking forward to using the improved genre progressions for all the genres next year.

We are confident that the English Language & Literacy Assessment project will deliver a marked increase in the quality and usefulness of student assessment. It will improve how reliable our assessments are and will shift our focus from individual assessments in individual genres to teachers closely moderating and deciding on overall student levels based on multiple pieces of evidence. This will mean more holistic, rounded and consistent assessment of each student's level.

The new system will also be able to represent this achievement in ways currently impossible, through instantaneous on-demand data summaries and graphical depictions, which will allow teachers to:

- hone in on specific individual and cross-class student needs at the beginning of term,
- plan teaching based on reliably identifying students zones of proximal development (ZPDs) and moving students up the Language Levels and the Foundations for Writing Continuum.
- evaluate how much individual, class, cohort and whole-school improvement is achieved at the end of the term, and
- serve as a springboard for evaluating the effectiveness of various teaching approaches trialled.

Late in 2019, we met with a programmer to explain how the whole new system would work. His response was that the vision we had created and the functionality we desired was possible from a technical perspective and that he was excited to bring it to life for us. In early 2020, we will hand over the English Language & Literacy Assessment project to him and begin the process of regular consultation, trialling, feedback and refinement with him.

Highlight 4

FISO Priority: Excellence in Teaching and Learning

Dimension: Building Practice Excellence

In 2019 WELS Secondary achieved the Annual Implementation Goal (1, 1.1) 12 month target

- Samples have been taken from 247 students over the course of 2019. This comprises 165 students with interrupted education and 82 students with equivalent education.
- Over 2019, the average Language and Literacy level growth for students (within a term) was 1.29 levels (1.27 levels for interrupted students and 1.38 levels for equivalent students).
- Over 2019, on average, 70.04% of students have shown improvement of 1 or more Language and Literacy Levels, each term (70.3% interrupted and 69.51% equivalent).

In 2019, WELS primary achieved AIP Goal 2 12 month target 2.1 – Ascertain current percentages of students in each cohort who achieve 1 or more writing levels each term based on a subset of the students population. In doing this, we have progressed towards our SSP goal 2 - To improve the capacity of students to compose texts.

We have ascertained the following percentages and will work towards increasing these in the next three years of the SSP.

Percentage of students who achieved one or more Language & Literacy Levels per term (over 4 terms):

F-2 (oral language)

Equivalent cohort – 45%

Pre-Literate and Interrupted cohorts – 65%

3-6 (written language)

Equivalent cohort – 86%

Pre-Literate and Interrupted cohorts – 82%

Engagement

In 2019, attendance, which the Department uses as a measure of engagement, remained extremely high at 92.8%. Student Attitude is also an indicator of engagement. In the Student Attitude to School Survey, students across primary and secondary sites positively endorsed:

Stimulated learning (years 5-6: 100%, years 7-12: 93.1%)

Sense of confidence (years 5-6: 87%, years 7-12: 90.3%)

Managing bullying (years 5-6: 97.5%, years 7-12: 90.5%)

Western English Language School has maintained and increased levels of positive endorsement of student attitude. Our aim moving forwards is to maintain these high engagement levels for students.

Evidence from Cases21 and local research indicates that non-attendance at Western English Language School is generally a result of illness and appointments related to settlement, such as housing, Centrelink and health.

Wellbeing

FISO Priority: Positive climate for learning Dimension: Health and Wellbeing

2019 Braybrook data - Student Safety Survey

In term 2 2019, the school began surveying students twice a term to measure student safety across all sites. The internal survey looks at student attitudes towards safety and managing bullying. It is run twice a term and early data indicates:

-In response to the statement "I feel cared about by a teacher or an adult at this school"; 99% responded 'yes' and 1% responded 'no'

-In response to the statement "I can talk about my problems to someone at my school"; 96% responded 'yes' and 4% responded 'no'

-In response to the statement "I feel safe at school"; 81% responded 'always', 17% responded 'sometimes' and 2% responded 'never'

-In response to the statement "An adult at this school will help if someone bullies me or another student; 73% responded 'always', 20% responded 'sometimes' and 7% responded 'never'

-In response to the statement "I know where to get help if someone hurts me"; 87% responded 'always', 10% responded 'sometimes' and 3% responded 'never'

-In response to the statement "All students are treated fairly; 72% responded 'always', 22% responded 'sometimes' and 6% responded 'never'

-In response to the statement "Teachers teach us how to solve problems with others; 80% responded 'always', 18% responded 'sometimes' and 2% responded 'never'

-In response to the statement "People are mean to me because I am different to them"; 76% responded 'always', 21% responded 'sometimes' and 3% responded 'never'

The welfare team is exploring this data to drive wellbeing initiatives across the school and support students.

In 2019, an emphasis was placed on the provision of a safe and supportive learning environment. A school-wide positive behaviour support model was reintroduced by the Wellbeing Team and supported by the South Western Region SWPBS coach.

With the guidance of the regional coach, classroom teachers developed Tier One positive behaviour strategies resulting in the school-wide publication of the 'Creating Successful Classrooms' and 'Behaviour Response Continuum' documents. These documents prompted a consistent approach to behaviour management across the school. Hence, there was a reduction in the number of behaviour incidents recorded on the Student Mapping Tool. Furthermore, referrals to the leadership team decreased as a result of classroom teachers confidently managing low-level behaviours through strategies such as prompting and re-directing.

This was further evidenced by the continued improvement in the results of the student Attitude to School Survey (AToSS) in 2019. Parents and students also confirmed the school provided a safe and positive learning environment. Other highlights included linking SWPBS with a trauma informed approach. This was achieved by delivering professional development to the staff, facilitated by Foundation House. These initiatives led to a shift in staff attitudes and teaching practices that reinforce positive behaviour, effectively managing minor behaviours in the classroom and considering a range of student wellbeing issues unique to our setting.

Financial performance and position

WELS considers it good practice to conclude the year with a small surplus. However 2019 concluded with a deficit of \$122,953 as the school experienced a surge in student enrolments in Term 4 2019.

Students and parent satisfaction with the school was very high, thanks to the school's equity funding that has allowed for well-planned and intensive student support. Equity funding for disadvantaged students has been the most significant means of improving our delivery of programs and student support throughout the six campus school.

Grants awarded to WELS enabled specific programs to be run throughout the year---Ross Trust Fund Scene 1 Take 2, Ross Trust Fly Girls Footscray Swim Grant, John Byrne Fund, Optometry-New Life New Vision –Magistrate Court Grant, Stan Willis Trust, Boys Squad Grant, Phyllis Connor Memorial Trust Grant, Garden-Aussie Vic Grant, VU Student Travel Grant, John Byrne Trust, DPC Community Kitchen Garden Grant and VMC Community Garden Grant, Stephanie Alexander Grant.




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

Performance Summary

The Government School Performance Summary 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.

Members of the community can contact the school for an accessible version of these data tables if required.

Key: Range of results for the middle 60% of Victorian Government Language Schools:  Results for this school:  Median of all Victorian Government Language Schools: 

School Profile

Enrolment Profile

A total of 372 students were enrolled at this school in 2019, 187 female and 185 male.

100 percent were EAL (English as an Additional Language) students and 0 percent ATSI (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) students.

Overall Socio-Economic Profile

Based on the school's Student Family Occupation and Education index which takes into account parents' occupations and education.



Parent Satisfaction Summary

Measures the percent endorsement by parents on their school satisfaction level, as reported in the annual *Parent Opinion Survey*. The percent endorsement indicates the percent of positive responses (agree or strongly agree).

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



School Staff Survey

Measures the percent endorsement by staff on School Climate, as reported in the annual *School Staff Survey*. The percent endorsement indicates the percent of positive responses (agree or strongly agree).

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



Financial Performance and Position

Commentary on the financial performance and position is included in the About Our School section at the start of this report

Financial Performance - Operating Statement Summary for the year ending 31 December, 2019		Financial Position as at 31 December, 2019	
Revenue	Actual	Funds Available	Actual
Student Resource Package	\$9,450,342	High Yield Investment Account	\$1,413,182
Government Provided DET Grants	\$1,869,118	Official Account	\$18,190
Government Grants Commonwealth	\$12,191	Other Accounts	\$0
Government Grants State	\$24,450	Total Funds Available	\$1,431,372
Revenue Other	\$130,272		
Locally Raised Funds	\$107,679		
Total Operating Revenue	\$11,594,053		
Equity¹			
Equity (Social Disadvantage)	\$1,023,597		
Equity Total	\$1,023,597		
Expenditure		Financial Commitments	
Student Resource Package ²	\$9,572,145	Operating Reserve	\$362,406
Books & Publications	\$35,989	Provision Accounts	\$899
Communication Costs	\$33,330	School Based Programs	\$759,442
Consumables	\$118,096	Capital - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months	\$702,546
Miscellaneous Expense ³	\$566,469	Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months	\$22,556
Professional Development	\$35,649	Total Financial Commitments	\$1,847,850
Property and Equipment Services	\$492,993		
Salaries & Allowances ⁴	\$993,403		
Trading & Fundraising	\$70,136		
Travel & Subsistence	\$6,568		
Utilities	\$44,201		
Total Operating Expenditure	\$11,968,980		
Net Operating Surplus/-Deficit	(\$374,928)		
Asset Acquisitions	\$139,553		

- (1) The Equity funding reported above is a subset of overall revenue reported by the school
- (2) Student Resource Package Expenditure figures are as of 26 February 2020 and are subject to change during the reconciliation process.
- (3) Misc Expenses may include bank charges, health and personal development, administration charges, camp/excursion costs and taxation charges.
- (4) Salaries and Allowances refers to school-level payroll.

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.

How to read the Annual Report

What does the *About Our School* section refer to?

The About Our School page provides a brief background on the school, an outline of the school's performance over the year and plans for the future.

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.

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

The Performance Summary reports on data in three key areas:

Achievement

- student achievements in:
 - English and Mathematics for National Literacy and Numeracy tests (NAPLAN)
 - English and Mathematics for teacher judgements against the curriculum
 - all subjects for Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) examinations (secondary schools)

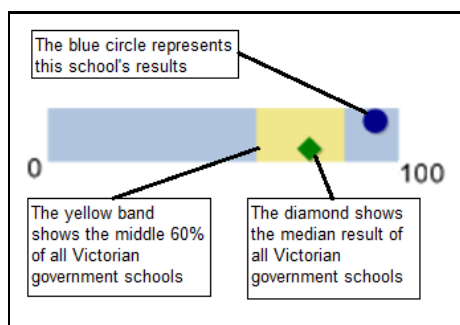
Engagement

- student attendance and engagement at school
- how many students leaving school go on to further studies or full-time work (secondary, P-12 and specialist schools)

Wellbeing

- Attitudes to School Survey (ATOSS)
- Sense of connectedness
- Management of Bullying

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



What does *School Comparison* refer to?

The School Comparison is a way of comparing this school's performance to similar schools in Victoria.

The comparison measure takes into account the school's socio-economic background of students, the number of non-English speaking students and the size and location of the school.

The Similar School Comparison will identify if a school's result is 'Similar', 'Above', or 'Below' relative to the similar schools group with similar characteristics and is available for latest year data only.



What does '*Data not available*' or '*ND*' mean?

Some schools have too few students enrolled to provide data. There may be no students enrolled in some year levels so school comparisons are not possible.

New schools have only the latest year of data and no comparative data from previous years.

The Department also recognises unique circumstances in Specialist, Select Entry, English Language and Community Schools where school-to-school comparisons are not appropriate.

What is the *Victorian Curriculum*?

The Victorian Curriculum F–10 sets out what every student should learn during their first 11 years of schooling. The curriculum is the common set of knowledge and skills required by students for life-long learning, social development and active and informed citizenship.

The curriculum has been developed to ensure that school subjects and their achievement standards enable continuous learning for all students, including students with disabilities.

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 a disability 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').