

# 2022 Annual Report to the School Community

School Name: Western English Language School (8838)



- All teachers at the school meet the registration requirements of the Victorian Institute of Teaching ([www.vit.vic.edu.au](http://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 of the previous calendar year 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.

- This 2022 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

# About Our School

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## School context

**WELS Vision:** WELS empowers students to develop the practical and academic language skills needed in mainstream settings within a safe and respectful, responsibility and caring as well as community connections.

**Our value of Respect** denotes both a positive feeling of esteem for a person and also specific actions and conducts representative of that esteem. We 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 parents and visitors. As such, all entities are expected to remain respectful to each other at all times. Students and teachers especially are expected. Exchanges should be friendly, in an appropriate tone, and should remain respectful. The majority of student/teacher interaction should be positive.

**Our value of Responsibility:** All school staff must take reasonable care to avoid harm to students. They have a duty of care. This includes teachers and volunteers. WELS believes each student has the right to learn in a comfortable environment that is happy, safe and secure. The best educational outcomes are maintained. The staff at WELS recognise the need to uphold consistent expectations and procedures throughout the school. These procedures are a key and self-disciplined role in our school environment. Staff and students demonstrate responsible behaviours everywhere in school and in the community.

**Our value of Caring:** Students and staff demonstrate caring by helping people, thinking about other people, sharing with others and accepting differences.

**Context and History of the School:** WELS provides newly arrived students in the metropolitan area of the South-West Victoria Region with the opportunity to be established in 2000 in order to teach English as an Additional Language to newly arrived students across South Western Victoria Region. Students include international students aged between five and eighteen years of age. In 2022, WELS operated five campuses across Victoria, located in Braybrook (that St Albans was re-opened as a campus in term 4). The campuses are all situated in high-settlement areas of newly arrived families.

### Campuses

- The largest campus is the F-10 Campus in Braybrook with capacity for 13 secondary and six primary classes (total of 247 students). The facilities include a library, gymnasium, science laboratory, home economics room and canteen.
- A four-class primary campus at Footscray operates within the Footscray City Primary School with access to the school's facilities (total of 104 students).
- A five-class primary campus at St Albans operated on the grounds of St Albans Primary School to house new arrivals classes in St Albans with access to the school's facilities (total of 52 students). This site was closed as an outpost in 2021, despite continuing demand and re-opening in term 4.
- 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 to 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 secondary classes. The campus can accommodate eight secondary classes (total of 104 students).

**Backgrounds of Students:** Students at WELS come from a range of countries. Students have predominantly come from Afghanistan, China, Bangladesh, and other countries. At one time, over 50 different nationalities can be represented in the school's enrolments. International fee-paying students also enrol for English Language Learning. WELS enrolls Year 1 to Year 10 students within six months of their arrival in Australia. Foundation students can enrol within 18 months of arrival in Australia (skilled and unskilled), refugee, humanitarian and various family categories. Students may be equivalently schooled or have interrupted or no previous schooling if their schooling has been disrupted or discontinued for two or more years.

**Teachers:** WELS employs teachers who have specialist qualifications in teaching English as an Additional Language. These qualifications, supported by professional development in wellbeing and the acquisition of the English language, equip teachers to teach the English language as well as the literacy and numeracy skills in mainstream settings and in the wider community. Staff participate in professional development on the cultural backgrounds of various cohorts, professional learning, student settlement and learning. In 2022 WELS staffing across the six sites consisted of 5 Principal class staff, 2.9 Learning Specialists, 2.4 Learning Support Officers (Administration, including .6 Mental Health position), and 17.86 Multicultural Education Aides (including SLP of 8.2). 2 Bilingual volunteers also supported the sites. Total central payroll FTE is 79.86 and 16.9 School Local Payroll.

**Multicultural Education Aides:** Multicultural Education Aides (MEAs) are staff whose main responsibility is supporting EAL students in their learning of the English language as well as providing additional support for all students. Due to their own experiences and community connections, MEAs are instrumental in supporting families. Students' health, safety and wellbeing are essential to learning and development.

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## Progress towards strategic goals, student outcomes and student engagement

### Learning

2022 was the final year of our 2018-2022 School Strategic Plan (SSP). As such, we had our School Review in term 4. We had two Learning Goals:

**Goal 1: To improve the capacity of students to compose texts.**

One of the ways we worked to achieve this goal was to build in protected time for teachers to meet and be supported to plan and assess using Assessment (ELLA).

**Goal 2: To improve the capacity of students to read.**

One of the ways we worked to achieve this goal was to continue to consolidate teachers' ability to teach and assess reading through

Within Goal 1, we had 1 target: *By 2022, 80 per cent of students in the Pre-Literate, Interrupted and Equivalent cohorts will have completed a course of their stay at Western English Language School (Western ELS) as assessed against the Language and Literacy Levels*

Based on our assessment data, we found that the average writing growth per secondary student per stay at the school was 2.1 LLs. All students reached 2.43 LLs growth and Equivalent students reached 1.94 LLs growth.

The data for primary students is presented in the table below:

<b>One or more levels (LL) progress during time at WELS – Primary Students</b>		
<b>Cohort</b>	<b>Term 4 - 2021</b>	<b>Term 1 and 2 - 2022</b>
Equivalent Students	14/16 students = 87%	34/39 students = 87%
Pre-Literate and Interrupted students	19/20 students = 95%	27/29 students = 93%

Based on this data, the Panel assessed that WELS had met this goal.

Within Goal 2, we had two targets:

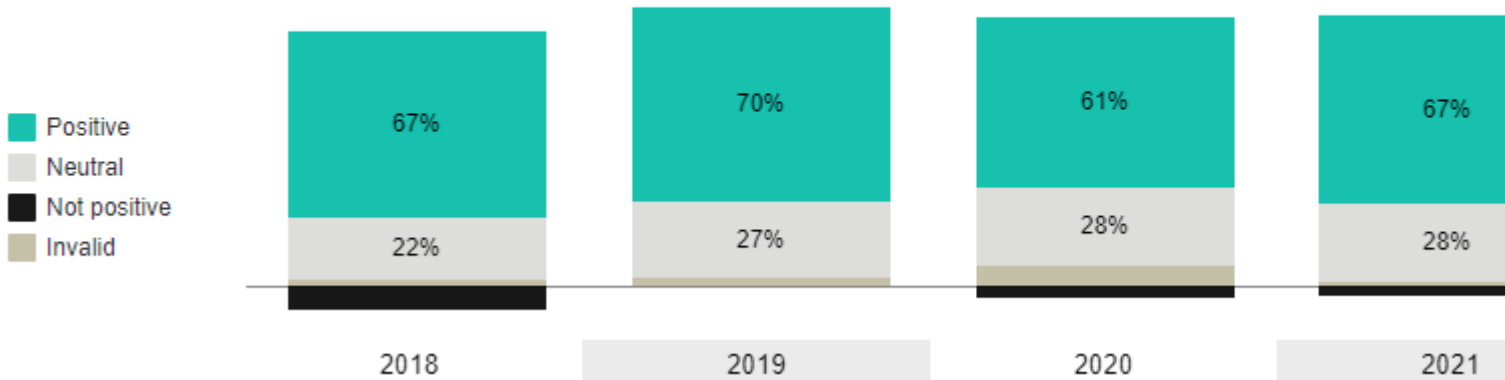
1. *By 2022, 95 percent of students in the Pre-Literate, Interrupted and Equivalent cohorts will show an improvement in reading by using a tool to be identified or developed.*
2. *By 2022, 80 per cent or more of teachers will positively endorse the Time to share pedagogical knowledge factor in the School's Professional Learning Communities.*

For target 1, we found that in 2021, 97 per cent of all students with pre- and post-assessment scores made one or more levels of growth. In 2022, 89 per cent made one or more levels of growth, however 100 per cent of Pre-Literate or Interrupted students made one level of growth, and 89 per cent of Equivalent students made one or more levels of growth. The school's 95 per cent target was partially met.

For target 2, we made promising progress in 2019 (70% positive endorsement) but then had a substantial drop to 61% in 2020. This was obviously adversely affected the time and opportunity teachers had to share pedagogical content knowledge. Endorsement increased to 70% in 2021. The Panel therefore concluded we had not met this goal. We will continue to focus on Professional Learning Communities in our future work to increase endorsement in this and many other factors.

## Responses by category over last 5 years (%) <sup>1</sup>

Time to share pedagogical content knowledge for all respondents



### Wellbeing

2022 was a big year for Wellbeing at WELS. We restructured our Wellbeing Team to include more members. We employed a newly appointed Primary Mental Health Coordinator who also continued their work.

We engaged Body Safety Australia to present to all of our students on consent and bodily autonomy.

We continued and expanded our work with health providers, including Foundation House, Royal Children's Hospital and a speech therapist.

We continued to expand and integrate the School-Wide Positive Behaviour Framework (SWPBS) into our school, for example by creating 'Behaviour Management Continuum' documents.

All of this has contributed to a more consistent, holistic approach that has directly benefited the wellbeing of our students.

### School Strategic Plan

In our previous SSP, we had one wellbeing goal: *To enhance the wellbeing and safety of all Western ELS students.*

This Goal had two targets:

1. *By 2022, 70 percent of students on identified visas at the end of their enrolment will show improvement in their safety, mental health and wellbeing.*
2. *By 2022, the percentage of students at each campus positively endorsing the student safety factor Managing bullying in the Attendance Survey will increase from 85 per cent (in 2018) to 95 per cent.*

The Panel found that the first target was not met. This was largely due to the difficulty of measuring our students' feelings of safety and wellbeing. As many students stay with us for only 6-12 months and enrol and exit at various times throughout the year, the Department's Student Satisfaction Survey is not a reliable measure of student wellbeing. We hope to find better ways to measure our students' wellbeing in 2023.

The Panel found that the second target was partially met. This was an extremely ambitious target as 90% is already very high; note that the Net Promoter Score (NPS) for the Department's Student Satisfaction Survey can be seen in the table below, our data fluctuated but was generally very high.

A ToSS variable – WELS	% positive endorsement 2018	% positive endorsement 2019	% positive endorsement 2020
Managing bullying - ALL	90	91	-
Managing bullying – Y4-6	96	94	-
Managing bullying – Y7-9	87	90	-
Managing bullying – Y10-12	91	91	-
<b>Campus breakdown</b>			
Braybrook	94	91	-
Footscray	89	79	-
Manor Lakes	96	100	-
Wyndham	81	93	-

## Engagement

WELS has always known the value and importance of ensuring our students are valued and supported. And because of this, our of this is our outstanding Student Attitudes to School results. Some examples are in the following table, which shows the percentage facts:

	WELS	Network	State
Effective teaching time	94%	61%	66%
Respect for diversity	83%	49%	53%
High expectations for success	96%	69%	74%
Motivation and interest	96%	61%	63%

At WELS, we have built and maintained inclusive and sustainable relationships with diverse communities and organisations, including refugee centres, local authorities, emergency services and education providers. This has helped us to seek guidance, advice and activities for newly arrived students and families, supporting their learning and wellbeing. It has also provided students with a plethora of activities from dancing to cooking and many, many other activities.

Teachers engage with students to design rich, open-ended tasks and the implementation of inclusive teaching, learning and wellbeing. Parents and carers have expressed that they feel engaged with the school and are grateful for the opportunity for their children to learn and Practical English.

**Attendance:** Attendance is a key marker of student engagement. As such, we are proud to have excellent data in this area, with 85% of Year 7-12 students attending more days of school, compared to 35% for the Network and 44% for the State. Similarly, 12% of Year 7-12 students are absent for more than 10 days, compared to 35% in the Network and 49% in the State.

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## Financial performance

All funds received from the Department have been expended or committed to subsequent years, to support the achievement of educational outcomes in line with Department policies, School Council approvals and the intent/purposes for which funding was provided.

The school was in a very sound financial position throughout 2022. The School Strategic Plan, along with the 2022 Annual Implementation Plan, outlines the use of funds to support school programs and priorities.

The Financial Commitments section of the Financial Performance and Position report shows an end-of-year deficit from both credit and cash balances. This is subject to change as the SRP reconciliation is yet to be completed for the 2022 school year.

In 2022, Western English Language School received the following (in cash):

- \$633,159 in equity funding which was fully expended through additional teaching, Mental Health and MEA staffing.
- \$103,870 for Swimming in Schools (all sites).
- \$39,065 in Career Education Funding (CEF)
- \$9,800 State Government Advance grant expended through additional programs across the two secondary sites.
- Other grants received were either received in the 2022 school year or carried forward from subsequent years (due to COVID19) and are yet to be expended.

**For more detailed information regarding our school please visit our website at [www.western.vic.edu.au](#)**