

2024 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 \(VIT\)](#)
- 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 24 March 2025 at 10:40 AM by Laurence Guttman (Principal)

- As executive officer of the school council, I attest that this 2024 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 25 March 2025 at 10:04 AM by Laurence Guttman (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
- a summary of parent responses in the Parent Opinion Survey, shown against the statewide average for Language schools
- school staff responses in the area of School Climate in the School Staff Survey, shown against the statewide average for Language schools

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.

About Our School

School context

Western English Language School (WELS) 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.

- Our value of Respect denotes both a positive feeling of esteem for a person and also specific actions and conduct representative of that esteem. It is the goal of WELS to create a mutually respectful atmosphere between all individuals involved within our school including students, parents and carers, teachers, all other staff members and visitors. As such, all stakeholders are expected to remain respectful to each other at all times.
- Our value of Responsibility: Every student has the right to learn in a happy, safe and engaging environment. 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 towards a more responsible 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 others, and sharing and accepting others for who they are.

Context and History of the School: WELS was established in 2000 to provide newly arrived students in the metropolitan area of the South-West Victoria Region with their first experience of an Australian school in an intensive English as an Additional Language program. Students who enrol are newly arrived migrant, refugee and international students aged between five and eighteen years. In 2024, WELS operated six campuses, located in Braybrook, Wyndham, Footscray, Manor Lakes, St Albans and Melton. 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 F-10 Campus is the administrative hub of the school. 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 52 students).
- A five-class primary campus at St Albans operates on the grounds of St Albans Primary School. Students at this campus 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.
- 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 seven secondary classes (total of 91 students).
- The Melton campus can accommodate 6 primary class and is located on the site of Melton Primary School.

Backgrounds of Students: Students at WELS come from a range of countries. Students have predominantly come from Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Pakistan, Myanmar, Democratic Republic of Congo and Vietnam. At any one time, over 50 different nationalities can be represented in the school's enrolments. International fee-paying students also enrol for English Language tuition alongside refugee and migrant students. 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. Students arrive on a variety of visas, including migrant (skilled and unskilled), refugee, humanitarian and various family categories. Students may be equivalently schooled or have interrupted or no prior schooling. A student is classified as having had interrupted schooling if their schooling has been disrupted or discontinued for two or more years.

Teachers: In most cases, WELS employs teachers who have specialist qualifications in teaching English as an Additional Language. In 2024, eleven teachers without formal TESOL qualifications benefited from the TESOL Study Support Program. This program fully funds tuition fees (75% paid by the EAL Unit and 25% funded by WELS) in an accredited TESOL certification. These qualifications, supplemented by the school's strong program of professional development in teaching and learning and wellbeing, equip teachers to teach the English language as well as 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. In 2024, WELS staffing across the six campuses consisted of 4 Principal class staff, 2 Learning Specialists, 15 Leading Teachers, 103 teaching staff, 4 Mental Health in Primary Schools, 10 Learning Tutors, .6 Para Professional, 9 Education Support staff (Administration, including .8 Mental Health position), 18.07 Multicultural Education Aides (including School Local Payroll of 8.6), 0.2 Bilingual volunteers also to assist with supporting students in classes across the WELS sites. Total central payroll 149 staff and 18.8 School Local Payroll teaching and ES staff.

Multicultural Education Aides: 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. Students' health, safety and wellbeing are essential to learning and development.

Progress towards strategic goals, student outcomes and student engagement

Learning

2024 was the second year of the school's School Strategic Plan (SSP). Our learning goal for the four-year plan is to maximise the learning growth of all students. This goal was based on the School Review Panel's analysis of school assessment data and the goal to enhance growth for all students.

To achieve this goal, we focussed on two Key Improvement Strategies (KIS). The first was to further embed consistent high-quality instructional practices across the school. One key component of this was to upskill teachers in their understanding of phonics and phonemic awareness as well as how to teach these to students. We began a whole-school Professional Learning (PL) program (that will continue into 2025) that includes the phonics program Sounds-Write, as well as creating resources that cater to the specific and unique needs of our English as an Additional Language (EAL) students. These include Phonemes & Pronunciation PL series and the creation of Phonemes and Pronunciation teaching and learning units.

The second KIS was to develop and embed school specific-assessment and reporting tools. We have continued to devote substantial resources to this space as it enables staff to more accurately, consistently and easily assess student growth and to plan future teaching befitting students' needs. A key component of this KIS has been the development of our English Language & Literacy Assessment (ELLA) online system. In 2024, we completed our Secondary Writing ELLA and have created draft versions of our Primary Reading ELLA and Secondary Writing ELLA.

We achieved 7 of the 8 outcomes associated with this goal:

Primary Outcomes:

- 88% of Primary students achieved two or more reading levels growth over their stay (target met)
- 97% of Primary students achieved one or more levels growth in writing over their stay (target met)

Secondary Outcomes:

- 48% of Secondary age students achieving two EAL sub-levels from 67% (2022) to 69% (target unmet)
- 92% of Secondary age students achieving one or more LLs growth 86% (2022) to 88% (target met)

Attitude to School Survey (AtoSS) Outcomes

- Academic emphasis from 66% (2022) to 73% in 2024 (target met)
- Collective efficacy from 66% (2022) to 84% in 2024 (target significantly exceeded)
- Guaranteed and viable curriculum involvement from 68% (2022) to 80% in 2024 (target exceeded)
- Teacher collaboration from 58% (2022) to 65% in 2024 (target exceeded)

Wellbeing

Our wellbeing goal for our current SSP is to enhance the wellbeing of all students. We are well aware that the wellbeing of our students is incredibly important and must remain an ongoing priority. As a New Arrivals setting, we provide wellbeing support to our students in a culturally sensitive way that takes into account their prior education, experiences, knowledge and beliefs. To do this in 2024, we provided students with learning related to consent, voice and agency, emotional, physical & sexual health and wellbeing through: Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships (RRRR); Body Safe Australia; School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS); and High Impact Wellbeing Strategies (HIWS).

We also provided parents and carers with related information through Parent Information Sessions. Another achievement was to continue to foster productive partnerships with families and the community. Examples of how we achieved this include: free English lessons for parents and carers that take place two times every week, providing advocacy and support to families to access healthcare and other services, and working closely with external agencies such as Foundation House, Centre for Multicultural Youth, The Royal Children's Hospital and the Western Bulldogs to provide our students and their families with support and opportunities.

In 2024, we continued to further embed whole-school tiered approach to wellbeing (KIS 3.a) by:

- developing the F-10 Wellbeing Team (Mental Health and Wellbeing Practitioner (MHP), Mental Health and Wellbeing Leaders (MHWLs), and teachers), in conjunction with our Inclusion Connect coach
- further developing our Health & Wellbeing curriculum and pastoral care lessons
- embedding the Disability Inclusion process

Our efforts in this space have been reflected in our students' engagement and wellbeing. Students increasingly have a common metalanguage around health and wellbeing that enables them to recognise and name their emotions. This, coupled with their growing understanding of how to seek help, has contributed to making them happy, healthy and ready for learning.

The table below outlines the survey results that were targets in our 2024 AIP:

| Survey | Domain | 2022 | 2024 target | 2024 | Met |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|------|-------------|------|-----|
| Attitudes to School | Effective classroom behaviour | 86% | 88% | 92% | Yes |
| Parent Opinion | Parent participation and involvement | 90% | 92% | 88% | No |
| | Teacher communication | 87% | 89% | 92% | Yes |
| | Student voice and agency | 91% | 93% | 91% | No |
| School Staff | Parent and community involvement | 45% | 53% | 59% | Yes |
| | Trust in students and parents | 67% | 73% | 74% | Yes |

Engagement

WELS has always recognised the importance of ensuring our students are valued and supported. As a result, our students feel safe and enjoy coming to school. This is reflected in our exceptional Student Attitudes to School survey results. Some examples are in the following table, which shows the percentage of positive endorsement for a sample of survey factors:

| Domain | WELS Network State | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|-----|-----|
| Effective teaching time | 95% | 62% | 66% |
| Emotional awareness and regulation | 81% | 67% | 69% |
| Managing bullying | 84% | 52% | 59% |
| Motivation and interest | 96% | 61% | 62% |

At WELS, we have developed and maintained inclusive and sustainable relationships with a wide range of communities and organisations, including youth groups, mental health and medical groups, refugee centres, local authorities, emergency services and education providers. These partnerships have enabled us to seek guidance, advice and feedback on how to offer inclusive services and activities for newly arrived students and families, supporting their learning and wellbeing. Additionally, they have provided students with a plethora of extracurricular activities, including bowling, sailing, dancing, cooking and many, many more.

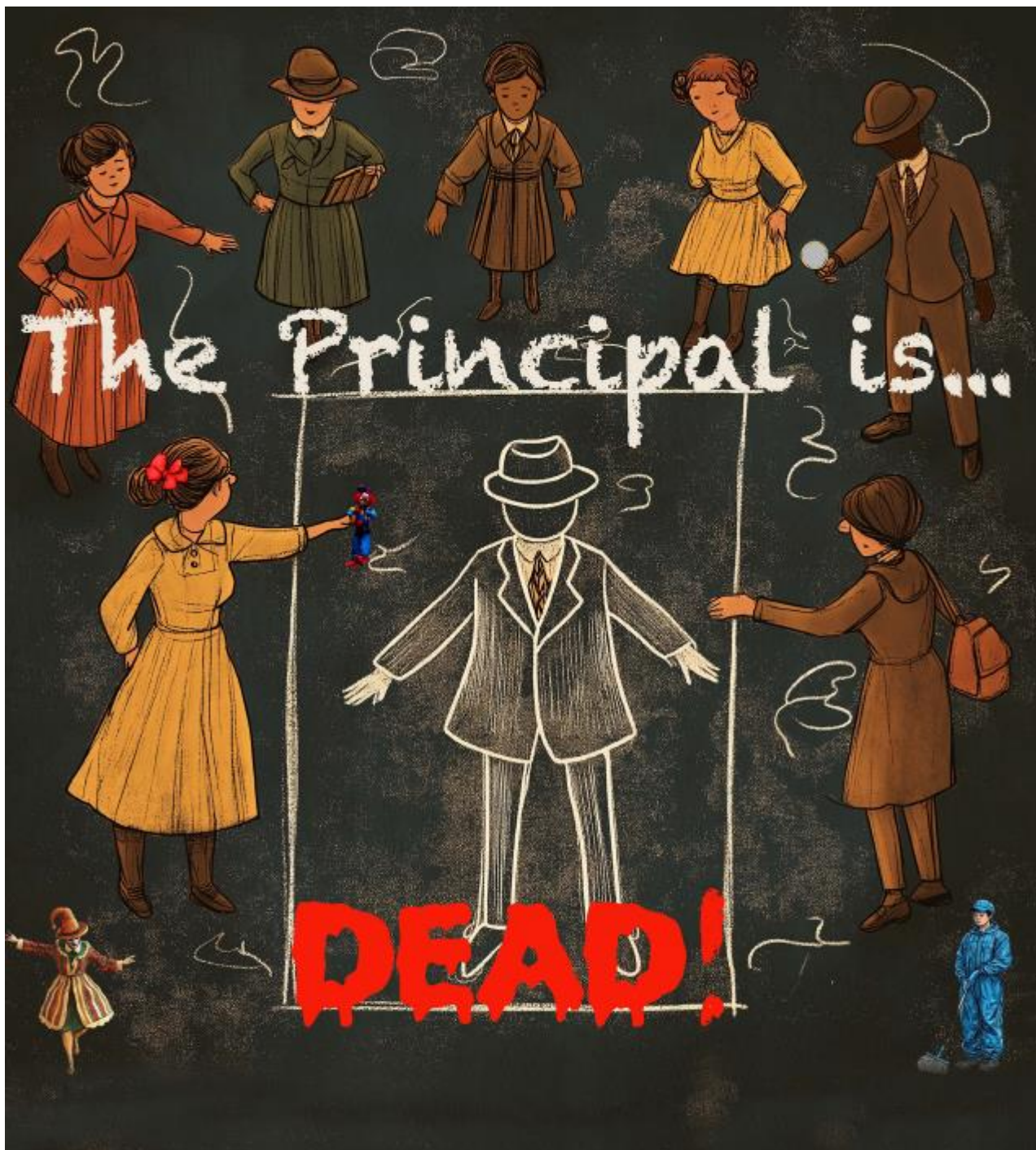
Teachers collaborate with students to create engaging activities. Inclusive and explicit teaching, learning and wellbeing practices are central to our school's approach. Parents and carers have expressed that they feel engaged with the school and are grateful for the opportunities we provide their children.

Attendance: Attendance is a key marker of student engagement. As such, we are proud to have excellent data in this area. In 2024, 13% of F-6 students missed 20 or more days of school, compared to 31% for the Network and 39% for the State. Similarly, 9% of Year 7-12 students missed 20 or more days of school, compared to 39% in the Network and 49% in the State.

Other highlights from the school year

In term 4, 2024, some students from our Braybrook Campus performed a school production of *The Principal is Dead*, which was also written by students and staff from WELS. Thank you also to Miss Mina and Mr Jay who supported the students through the writing, rehearsals and performance. It was a wonderful opportunity for the students to get a taste of the thrill of performance.


Thank you to Braybrook College, who provided us with an appropriate space in which to perform.




The Principal is...

DEAD!

S06 will unravel the mystery on
Friday 13th Dec, 2024
Braybrook Secondary College

 **Braybrook** College

 **Western English**
Language School

Financial performance

In 2024, Western English Language School received the following in Equity cash through the Student Resource Package (SRP):

- \$640,549.09 (social disadvantage).

The school's equity funds were used to fund:

- casual relief teachers to enable certain teaching projects and professional learning.
- an increase in time allocation for the secondary Mental Health
- additional Multicultural Education Aides to achieve a ratio of 1:28
- the cost of camps, excursions and student classroom supplies, including secondary backpacks to reduce the financial burden for our new arrivals families.

The school, using cash funds, had an exciting year upgrading the buildings and grounds. The new primary playground at the front of our Braybrook campus has been joyfully received by the students. The school buildings in the secondary wing underwent much needed painting works over the term four holidays.

Other SRP funds received in 2024 consist of:

- \$30,229 Tier 2 Disability Inclusion funding
- \$131,365 Swimming in Schools (6 campuses)
- \$44,456 Career Education Funding (CEF)
- \$14,000 Active Schools-Extracurricular Boost
- \$30,000 Active School Grants
- \$3,000 Active Schools-Physical Education (PE) and Sport
- \$17,408 Schools Mental Health Fund

State Government Grants:

- \$9,800 State Government Advance grant expended through additional programs across the two secondary campuses.

Other grants received were either received in the 2024 school year or carried forward from subsequent years and expended through additional curriculum programs for students.

Finally, the Student Resource Package (SRP) was in surplus at the end of 2024. Accumulated funds will be carried forward to the 2025 SRP.

**For more detailed information regarding our school please visit our website at
<https://www.wels.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 492 students were enrolled at this school in 2024, 210 female and 282 male.

100 percent of students had English as an additional language and 0 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).

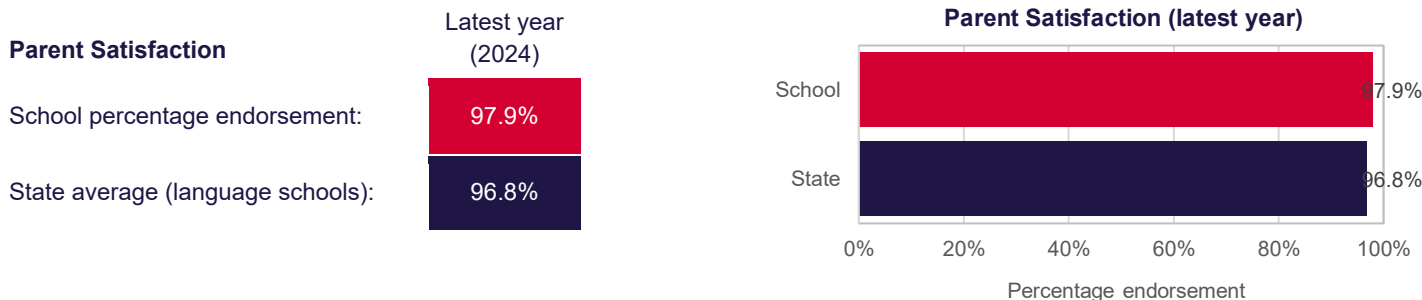
SFOE is a measure of socio-educational disadvantage of a school, based on educational and employment characteristics of the parents/carers of students enrolled at the school. Possible SFOE band values are: Low, Low-Medium, Medium and High. A 'Low' band represents a low level of socio-educational disadvantage,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

This school's SFOE band value is: High

Parent Satisfaction Summary

The percentage endorsement by parents on their General School Satisfaction, as reported in the annual Parent/Caregiver/Guardian Opinion Survey.

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

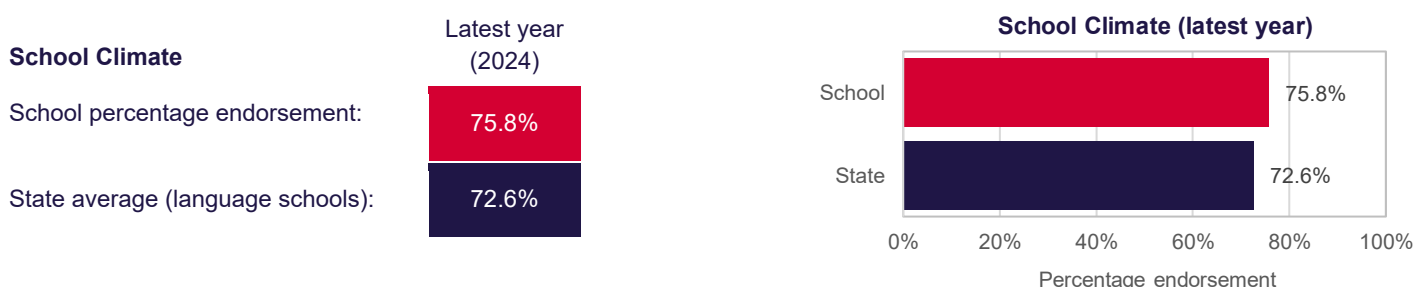


School Staff Survey

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.

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



Financial Performance and Position

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE - OPERATING STATEMENT SUMMARY FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 DECEMBER, 2024

| Revenue | Actual |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| Student Resource Package | \$13,201,895 |
| Government Provided DET Grants | \$2,974,060 |
| Government Grants Commonwealth | \$14,834 |
| Government Grants State | \$9,800 |
| Revenue Other | \$317,652 |
| Locally Raised Funds | \$90,449 |
| Capital Grants | \$0 |
| Total Operating Revenue | \$16,608,690 |

| Equity ¹ | Actual |
|---|--------------------|
| Equity (Social Disadvantage) | \$1,306,007 |
| Equity (Catch Up) | \$0 |
| Equity (Social Disadvantage – Extraordinary Growth) | \$0 |
| Equity Total | \$1,306,007 |

| Expenditure | Actual |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Student Resource Package ² | \$12,933,864 |
| Adjustments | \$0 |
| Books & Publications | \$22,194 |
| Camps/Excursions/Activities | \$214,855 |
| Communication Costs | \$25,015 |
| Consumables | \$211,056 |
| Miscellaneous Expense ³ | \$277,237 |
| Professional Development | \$124,320 |
| Equipment/Maintenance/Hire | \$221,116 |
| Property Services | \$429,491 |
| Salaries & Allowances ⁴ | \$1,472,598 |
| Support Services | \$499,536 |
| Trading & Fundraising | \$71,427 |
| Motor Vehicle Expenses | \$5,497 |
| Travel & Subsistence | \$0 |
| Utilities | \$59,693 |
| Total Operating Expenditure | \$16,567,899 |
| Net Operating Surplus/-Deficit | \$40,791 |
| Asset Acquisitions | \$14,512 |

- (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 17 Feb 2025 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 2024

| Funds available | Actual |
|-------------------------------|------------------|
| High Yield Investment Account | \$924,215 |
| Official Account | \$40,146 |
| Other Accounts | \$4,872 |
| Total Funds Available | \$969,232 |

| Financial Commitments | Actual |
|---|--------------------|
| Operating Reserve | \$605,673 |
| Other Recurrent Expenditure | \$0 |
| Provision Accounts | \$11,122 |
| Funds Received in Advance | \$0 |
| School Based Programs | \$463,661 |
| Beneficiary/Memorial Accounts | \$5,170 |
| Cooperative Bank Account | \$0 |
| Funds for Committees/Shared Arrangements | \$0 |
| Repayable to the Department | \$0 |
| Asset/Equipment Replacement < 12 months | \$6,270 |
| Capital - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months | \$264,000 |
| Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months | \$220,616 |
| Asset/Equipment Replacement > 12 months | \$0 |
| Capital - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months | \$0 |
| Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months | \$0 |
| Total Financial Commitments | \$1,576,511 |

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.