

2020 Annual Report to The School Community



School Name: Essex Heights Primary School (4903)



- 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 2020 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 26 April 2021 at 01:15 PM by George Perini (Principal)

The 2020 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 27 April 2021 at 11:40 AM by Jennifer Bittner (School Council President)

How to read the Annual Report

What has changed for the 2020 Annual Report?

Improved appearance

The appearance of the Performance Summary has been updated to more clearly represent information and to assist interpretation and comparison of individual school's data with state averages and similar school groups.

School performance data

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

For example, in 2020 school-based surveys ran under changed circumstances, and NAPLAN was not conducted. Absence and attendance data may have been influenced by local processes and procedures adopted in response to remote and flexible learning.

Schools should keep this in mind when using this data for planning and evaluation purposes. Those schools who participated in the Student Attitudes to School survey in 2020 should also refer to the advice provided regarding the consistency of their data.

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

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

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

The 'Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO)' section includes the improvement initiatives the school has selected and the progress they have made towards achieving them.

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 Primary schools
- school staff responses in the area of School Climate in the School Staff Survey, shown against the statewide average for Primary schools

Achievement

- English and Mathematics for Teacher Judgements against the curriculum
- English and Mathematics for National Literacy and Numeracy tests (NAPLAN).
Note: NAPLAN tests were not conducted in 2020

Engagement

Student attendance at school

Wellbeing

Student responses to two areas in the Student Attitudes to School Survey:

- Sense of Connectedness
- Management of Bullying

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

How to read the Annual Report (continued)

What do 'Similar Schools' refer to?

Similar Schools are a group of Victorian government schools with similar characteristics to the school.

This grouping of schools has been created by comparing each school's socio-economic background of students, the number of non-English speaking students and the school's size and location.

What does 'NDP' or 'NDA' mean?

'NDP' refers to no data being published for privacy reasons or where there are insufficient underlying data. For example, very low numbers of participants or characteristics that may lead to identification will result in an 'NDP' label. For the 2020 Student Attitudes to School survey, specifically, the similar school group averages are replaced by 'NDP' where less than 50% of schools in a given similar school group did not participate in the 2020 survey.

'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 'Victorian Curriculum'?

The Victorian Curriculum F–10 sets out what every student should learn during his or her first eleven 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 Victorian Curriculum is assessed through teacher judgements of student achievement based on classroom learning.

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. These levels 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

Essex Heights Primary School is situated in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne within the municipal boundaries of the City of Monash. The school reflects a diverse student population, which is enriched culturally and linguistically and caters for a number of students funded under the PSD program. Essex Heights' community supports and encourages individuality and independent learning within supportive and secure classroom environments.

Through our 'School Values' of friendliness, honesty, inclusiveness, persistence and respect, children develop positive attitudes and acquire skills that equip them for their future. All children are valued within a supportive and stimulating school environment where each child is encouraged to reach his / her potential.

The Essex Heights staff have also identified staff values that reflect their collective beliefs about their professional role, alongside the community values.

- We place the child at the centre of everything we do
- We conduct ourselves in a professional manner at all times; with children, colleagues and parents
- We work together – recognizing our collective responsibility for all the children

The whole community encourages high expectations and promotes innovative and contemporary curriculum, differentiated to cater for the needs of all children. The school engenders a culture of connectedness and creativity and whilst focused on developing literacy in a variety of ways as well as positive relationships, students are actively involved in learning programs covering a wide range of domains. In 2020, the school had 48.00 equivalent full time staff, 2 Principal class officers, 1.0 (2 x 0.5) acting Assistant Principals, 30.7 teachers and 13.3 Education Support staff.

Following a major facilities upgrade, the children have contemporary and innovative learning space environments throughout the school. This has transformed the learning and outdoor environments of Essex Heights PS, setting the school at the forefront of educational facilities in the eastern suburbs. The community has enthusiastically embraced this outcome.

Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO)

The School Strategic Plan (SSP) has three improvement priorities. The first is Excellence in Teaching and Learning, where the goal is to Improve Student Outcomes in Literacy and Numeracy. The related Key Improvement Strategies (KIS) are to build teacher capacity to cater for diversity within the classroom, to build staff capacity to track and monitor student progress to inform future learning and finally to embed consistent best practice including high impact teaching strategies. Throughout the year staff engaged in a range of Professional Learning (PL) to build their knowledge and skills in literacy and numeracy, engaged in 'learning sprints' (FISO Improvement Cycle) to consolidate important concepts by putting them into practice as well as continually developing their skills and implementation in student assessment and feedback. The second priority is to create a Positive Climate for Learning, where the goal is to Empower students' agency and voice in their learning. In 2020, though compromised by the COVID restrictions, we aimed to maintain a focus on a whole school understanding of student voice and agency. Throughout the year staff engaged in PL and implementation tasks to build teacher capacity to place student needs at the centre of their planning and delivery. This was evidenced by the implementation of Seesaw, online conferencing and reflected in work programs. The third priority is also related to building a positive climate for learning. The focus was to embed practices that enhance social and emotional learning. The planned focus to build staff capacity to engage in peer to peer feedback was severely compromised by COVID restrictions. Essex Heights PS delivered on our KIS to develop a literacy instructional model. However, some of the associated AIP actions and professional development plans were modified to suit remote learning.

Achievement

During the COVID affected 2020, our school priorities pivoted in response to reflect the remote learning environment and the social and emotional needs of our students. Our academic focus narrowed to English and Mathematics inline with DET priority areas. In 2020, NAPLAN testing was cancelled meaning comparisons of student achievement and growth in Writing, Reading, Language Conventions and Numeracy against state and similar schools is not possible.

Teacher Judgment of student achievement in English shows that 96% of our students are performing at or above the age expected standards from Years Prep to 6. This is well above the state average and slightly above the average for similar schools. Teacher judgement of student achievement in Mathematics shows that 96.2% of students are performing at or above the age expected standards. This is well above the state average and slightly above the similar schools average.

During the remote and flexible learning period, students remained connected to their learning, teacher and classmates through daily video lessons and small group conferencing. Staff were able to utilise online resources for content-delivery and assessment and consequently developed new ways of differentiating for students. Students responded well to the home friendly, self-directed and flexible learning tasks. We have noted that a number of students thrived in the remote learning environment whilst a small number of students have been identified that had low levels of engagement. Our 2021 priority area of learning catch-up and extension is designed to meet the needs of these students.

Essex Heights PS provides a comprehensive curriculum based on the Victorian Curriculum. Students access excellent specialist programs in Visual Arts, Music, Physical Education and Indonesian Language and Culture. Within our exemplary Program for Students with a Disabilities (PSD), all students showed progress and achieved satisfactory or above satisfactory outcomes in their individual learning goals.

Engagement

Remote learning provided new challenges for the school to maintain our usual high levels of school engagement. A strategic, multi-faceted approach was developed by the school to ensure student engagement. It included:

- Daily class zoom meetings
- Small group and one-on-one conferences at least weekly
- Development of a school Google Site for work programs and support materials to be clearly accessed
- Provision of access to online resources to share, respond, submit and provide feedback on student work
- Hard copy work programs available at the school office for families without a printer
- Work program activities to suit the home environment, allow for flexibility and provide extensions and enablers
- PSD students and identified students at risk had daily one-on-one support from Education Support staff and classroom teachers
- Teachers and leaders held regular meetings to identify students not engaging and develop strategies to reengage
- The school provided on site supervision and assistance for students with essential worker parents
- Provision of laptops to families without access to ICT
- Regular, whole school engagement activities such as 'guess the teacher', Kahoot quizzes, school art gallery, 'secret message' and various video messages.
- Provision of mental and physical health resources via the school Google Site

To support student engagement during the transition back to onsite learning, our school revisited the Starting Up, Starting Out program that is designed to help students develop strategies to successfully transition from year to year. We continued to monitor student engagement during regular Year Level meetings using data collected from students attendance, teacher observations, health center visit data, student feedback and the use of the DET Student Wellbeing Tracker.

The average number of student absence days for 2020 was below the average for all government primary schools and slightly below statistically equivalent schools. The common reason for non attendance is illness and extended family holidays. Our Student Wellbeing Team continues to work with any families who need additional support to meet attendance requirements.

Wellbeing

The school sees education as a partnership between children, staff, parents and the broader community. The school recognises its role as a social agency and has put into place activities and structures which support student and parent needs. With the involvement of guidance officers, psychologists, a speech pathologist and expert school staff, structured programs are made available to our students.

Our whole school approach to safety, wellbeing and engagement includes student-centered 'School Values', a Social Competencies Program, extensive Student Leadership programs, comprehensive Student Management and Individual Learning Plans. These have all resulted in a safe and supportive school environment.

Our school has developed a School Wide Positive Behavior program (SWPB) that extends our School Values to agreed behaviours and expectations for the children. It also improves our tracking and monitoring of student wellbeing through the Compass student management software. Students are rewarded for positive behaviours and this is a significant focus at every assembly. This year the school fully implemented our own innovative program focused on the social and emotional learning (SEL) of children. The ArtSEL program feedback has been overwhelmingly positive from our whole school community (staff, students and parents). As well, a comprehensive Transition Program is provided for all students entering, moving through and leaving the school. The revised and expanded 'End of year Transition Program' further supports students in their preparation for transition to the next year level. Our very smooth start to the year confirms this is an effective program for the students. Our whole community is committed to the Essex Heights Values and use a restorative approach at all times. This is the platform for rich relationships and deep learning at Essex Heights PS.

In response to remote learning and to compliment the ArtSEL program, we will be partnering with The Resilience Project in 2021. The Resilience Project aims to develop resilience through gratitude, empathy, mindfulness and emotional literacy.

Financial performance and position

Essex Heights Primary School operates within closely managed budgets and aims to maintain a modest cash reserve. The financial position of the school is led and managed through the work of the Principal, Business Manager, Finance Committee and Essex Heights Primary School Council. The school operates under high levels of internal control, probity and accountability. Furthermore, the allocation of funds to educational programs continues to reflect the priorities of the Essex Heights Primary School Strategic Plan. Other sources of income outside the Student Resource Package were derived from the International Students and some minor grants. The school's equity funding was used to support the Intervention Program that assists student improve their literacy and numeracy skills. The revenue from locally raised funds is due largely to the demand and size of the School Instrumental Program; Out of School Hours Care Program (OHSC); the efforts of the Parents & Friends Association; Hire of Facilities and the Canteen. The Financial Commitment Summary 31 December 2020 identifies the school's commitments for the next 12 months. These funds have been allocated to various projects and programs within the school including ICT, School Strategic Plan Implementation, Out of School Hours Care, Professional Development, PFA funded Projects, the Mathematics Garden and Building & Grounds maintenance.

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

Performance Summary

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

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

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

SCHOOL PROFILE

Enrolment Profile

A total of 570 students were enrolled at this school in 2020, 263 female and 307 male.

42 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) which takes into account parents' occupations and education.

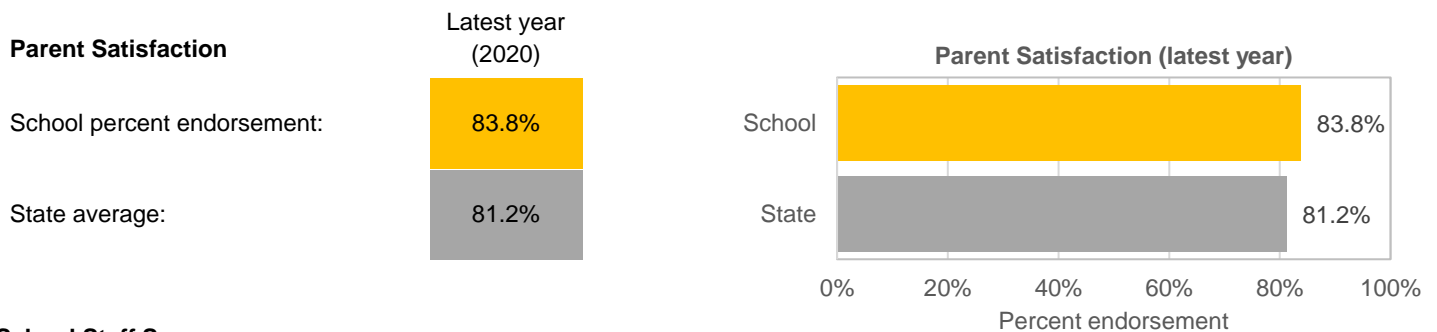
Possible socio-economic band values are: Low, Low-Medium, Medium and High.

This school's socio-economic band value is: Low

Parent Satisfaction Summary

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

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

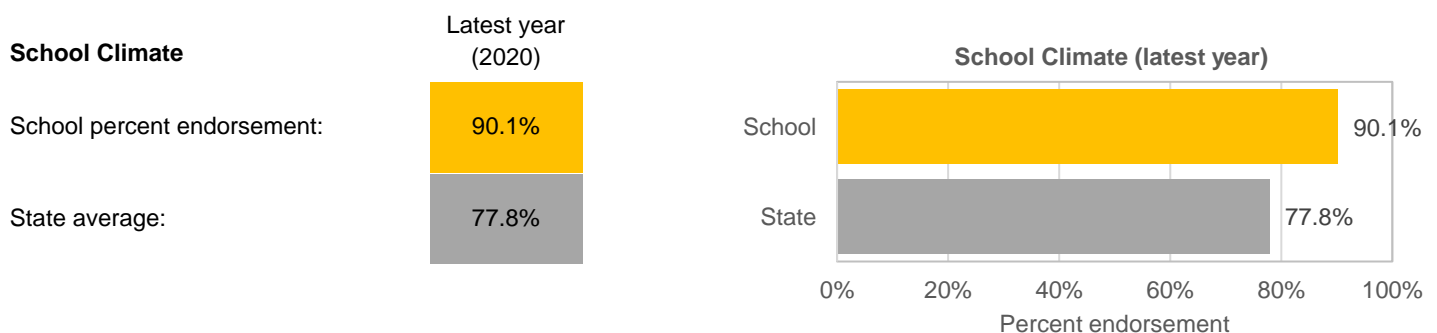


School Staff Survey

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

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

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



ACHIEVEMENT

Key: ‘Similar Schools’ are a group of Victorian government schools that are like this school, taking into account the school’s socioeconomic background of students, the number of non-English speaking students and the size and location of the school.

Teacher Judgement of student achievement

Percentage of students working at or above age expected standards in English and Mathematics.

English Years Prep to 6

Latest year
(2020)

School percent of students at or above age expected standards:

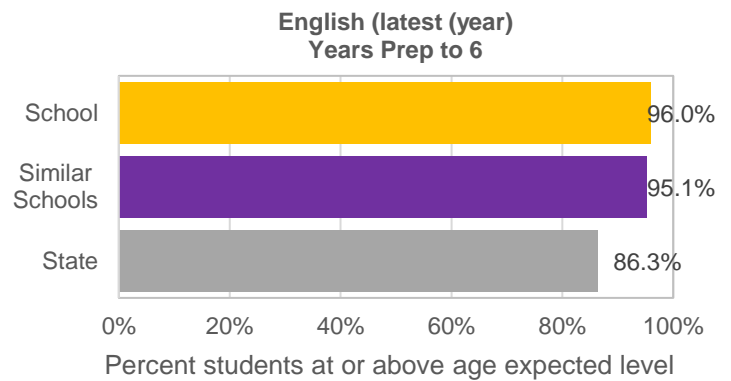
96.0%

Similar Schools average:

95.1%

State average:

86.3%



Mathematics Years Prep to 6

Latest year
(2020)

School percent of students at or above age expected standards:

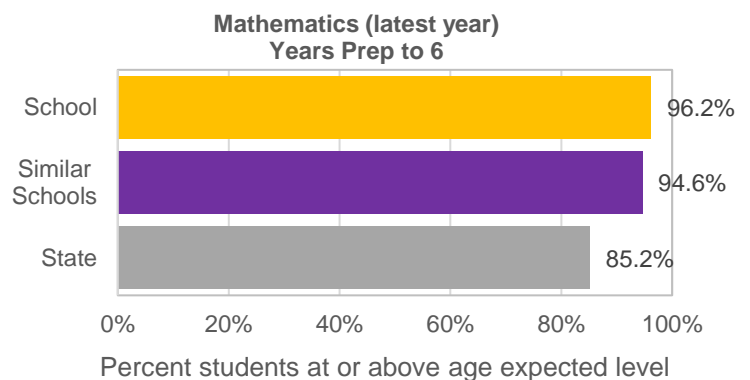
96.2%

Similar Schools average:

94.6%

State average:

85.2%



NAPLAN

NAPLAN tests were not conducted in 2020.

NAPLAN Learning Gain

NAPLAN learning gain is determined by comparing a student’s current year result to the results of all ‘similar’ Victorian students (i.e. students in all sectors in the same year level who had the same score two years prior).

NAPLAN tests were not conducted in 2020.

ENGAGEMENT

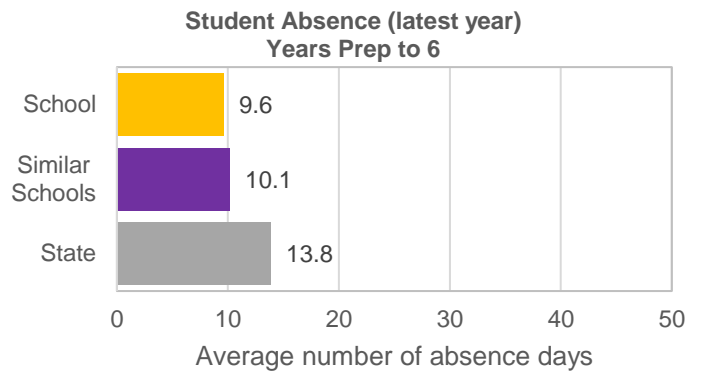
Key: ‘Similar Schools’ are a group of Victorian government schools that are like this school, taking into account the school’s socioeconomic background of students, the number of non-English speaking students and the size and location of the school.

Average Number of Student Absence Days

Absence from school can impact on students’ learning. Common reasons for non-attendance include illness and extended family holidays. Absence and attendance data in 2020 may have been influenced by local processes and procedures adopted in response to remote and flexible learning.

Student Absence Years Prep to 6

	Latest year (2020)	4-year average
School average number of absence days:	9.6	13.0
Similar Schools average:	10.1	12.6
State average:	13.8	15.3



Attendance Rate (latest year)

	Prep	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Attendance Rate by year level (2020):	95%	94%	96%	94%	95%	96%	95%

WELLBEING

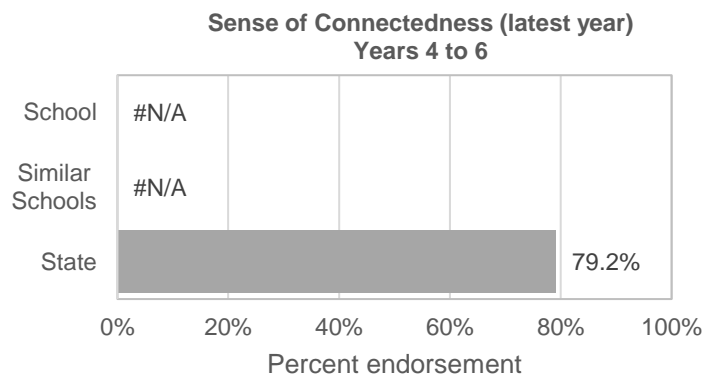
Key: ‘Similar Schools’ are a group of Victorian government schools that are like this school, taking into account the school’s socioeconomic background of students, the number of non-English speaking students and the size and location of the school.

Student Attitudes to School – Sense of Connectedness

The percent endorsement on Sense of Connectedness factor, as reported in the Attitudes to School Survey completed annually by Victorian Government school students, indicates the percent of positive responses (agree or strongly agree).

Schools who participated in the Student Attitudes to School survey in 2020 should refer to the advice provided regarding the consistency of their data.

Sense of Connectedness Years 4 to 6	Latest year (2020)	4-year average
School percent endorsement:	NDA	84.8%
Similar Schools average:	NDP	82.2%
State average:	79.2%	81.0%



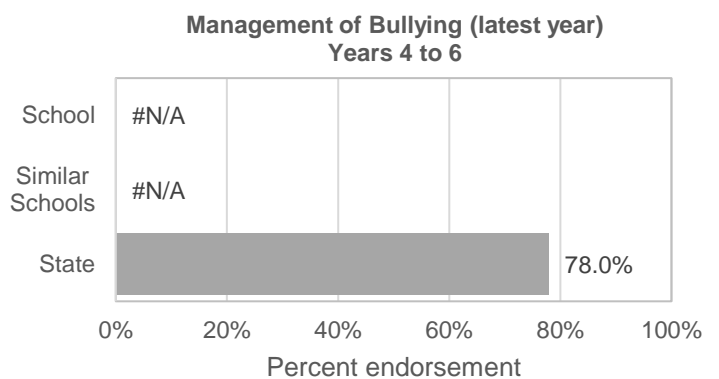
Due to lower participation rates and differences in collection methodology in 2020, data are often not comparable with previous years or within similar school groups. Care should be taken when interpreting these results.

Student Attitudes to School – Management of Bullying

The percent endorsement on Management of Bullying factor, as reported in the Attitudes to School Survey completed annually by Victorian Government school students, indicates the percent of positive responses (agree or strongly agree).

Schools who participated in the Student Attitudes to School survey in 2020 should refer to the advice provided regarding the consistency of their data.

Management of Bullying Years 4 to 6	Latest year (2020)	4-year average
School percent endorsement:	NDA	82.9%
Similar Schools average:	NDP	80.4%
State average:	78.0%	80.4%



Due to lower participation rates and differences in collection methodology in 2020, data are often not comparable with previous years or within similar school groups. Care should be taken when interpreting these results.

Financial Performance and Position

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE - OPERATING STATEMENT SUMMARY FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 DECEMBER, 2020

Revenue	Actual
Student Resource Package	\$4,811,112
Government Provided DET Grants	\$316,473
Government Grants Commonwealth	\$259,001
Government Grants State	NDA
Revenue Other	\$6,740
Locally Raised Funds	\$589,315
Capital Grants	NDA
Total Operating Revenue	\$5,982,641

Equity ¹	Actual
Equity (Social Disadvantage)	\$13,899
Equity (Catch Up)	NDA
Transition Funding	NDA
Equity (Social Disadvantage – Extraordinary Growth)	NDA
Equity Total	\$13,899

Expenditure	Actual
Student Resource Package ²	\$4,656,500
Adjustments	NDA
Books & Publications	\$198
Camps/Excursions/Activities	\$49,571
Communication Costs	\$10,547
Consumables	\$92,918
Miscellaneous Expense ³	\$18,894
Professional Development	\$12,694
Equipment/Maintenance/Hire	\$59,986
Property Services	\$89,132
Salaries & Allowances ⁴	\$575,079
Support Services	\$38,537
Trading & Fundraising	\$37,385
Motor Vehicle Expenses	NDA
Travel & Subsistence	NDA
Utilities	\$52,171
Total Operating Expenditure	\$5,693,613
Net Operating Surplus/-Deficit	\$289,028
Asset Acquisitions	\$47,663

- (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 01 Mar 2021 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 2020

Funds available	Actual
High Yield Investment Account	\$594,171
Official Account	\$37,662
Other Accounts	\$30,881
Total Funds Available	\$662,714

Financial Commitments	Actual
Operating Reserve	\$162,636
Other Recurrent Expenditure	NDA
Provision Accounts	\$28,677
Funds Received in Advance	NDA
School Based Programs	\$171,054
Beneficiary/Memorial Accounts	NDA
Cooperative Bank Account	NDA
Funds for Committees/Shared Arrangements	\$40,379
Repayable to the Department	NDA
Asset/Equipment Replacement < 12 months	\$50,000
Capital - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months	\$16,971
Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months	\$85,500
Asset/Equipment Replacement > 12 months	NDA
Capital - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months	NDA
Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months	NDA
Total Financial Commitments	\$555,217

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.