

2023 Annual Report to the School Community

School Name: Coburg Special Developmental School (5261)



- 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 12 March 2024 at 07:22 PM by Warren Tofts (Principal)

- This 2023 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 29 April 2024 at 06:08 AM by Vance Duke (School Council President)

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

Learning

- English and Mathematics for Teacher Judgements against the curriculum

Engagement

Student attendance and engagement at school, including:

- how many exiting students go on to further studies or full-time work

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

Key terms used in the Performance Summary are defined below:

NDP and NDA

'NDP' refers to no data being published for privacy reasons or where there are insufficient underlying data. For example, very low numbers of participants or characteristics that may lead to identification will result in an 'NDP' label.

'NDA' refers to no data being available. Some schools have no data for particular measures due to low enrolments. There may be no students enrolled in some year levels, so school comparisons are not possible.

Note that new schools only have the latest year of data and no comparative data from previous years. The department also recognises unique circumstances in Specialist, Select Entry, English Language, Community Schools and schools that changed school type recently, where school-to-school comparisons are not appropriate.

What is the 'Towards Foundation Level Victorian Curriculum'?

The Victorian Curriculum is assessed through teacher judgements of student achievement based on classroom learning.

The 'Towards Foundation Level Victorian Curriculum' is integrated directly into the curriculum and is referred to as 'Levels A to D'.

'Levels A to D' may be used for students with disabilities or students who may have additional learning needs

'Levels A to D' are not associated with any set age or year level that links chronological age to cognitive progress (i.e., there is no age expected standard of achievement for 'Levels A to D').

Updates to the *'Performance Summary'* in the 2023 Annual Report

Reporting on the following measures has been updated in the 2023 Annual Report to align with changes to departmental and public reporting products.

Parent/Caregiver/Guardian Opinion Survey, School Staff Survey and the Attitudes to School Survey

The calculation of the percentage endorsement for all survey measures has been revised to no longer include skipped responses. This applies to all survey measures reported in the Performance Summary. The change to the calculation reduces the negative impact of skipped responses on school results, particularly where there were a small number of respondents to the survey.

Additionally, the Parent Satisfaction measure has been revised to use the percentage endorsement of the 'General School Satisfaction' factor of the Parent/Caregiver/Guardian Opinion Survey only. Previously, this measure reflected an average of multiple factors in the survey. The change to reporting a single factor is consistent with how Parent Satisfaction is reported to schools and in other public reports.

About Our School

School context

At Coburg SDS, we strive to provide all students with the skills needed to meet their full potential through our child-centred, transdisciplinary learning approach. Students are empowered to be active members of the school and wider community by building independence, communication, and relationships. We work together as a team to provide a positive, safe, and engaging learning environment where student voice and readiness for life after school is at the centre of our teaching and learning.

Learning goals for each student are established through negotiated education plans developed in collaboration by the 'team around the learner', which can include education staff, therapy staff and families. The school employs speech and occupational therapists to ensure that all students can engage as effectively as possible with the curriculum.

Our school follows the School Wide Positive Behaviour Supports (SWPBS) framework, which has been developed from evidence and based on data, demonstrating the most effective ways to prevent and respond to behaviours of concern at our school. Research has shown that SWPBS tiered supports are successful in reducing problem behaviour, improving school culture, and increasing engagement and academic performance. We have introduced, and are continuing to embed, Prevent, Teach, Reinforce (PTR) within our practice to support the prevention of challenging behaviours and increase the teaching of more positive and desired behaviours.

We continue to improve our Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) practices across all areas of the curriculum broadening our focus to both wellbeing and engagement within our inquiry cycles, including voice and agency. The PLCs are successful in improving both teacher competencies and student outcomes. Coburg Special Developmental School continues to be a PLC link school, which has afforded us opportunities to positively support other schools in their development of PLC practices.

Our school values are Building Independence, Building Communication and Building Relationships. These values were developed with input from staff, students, and families during 2017 and continue to be relevant to our community aspirations, as shown through feedback during the 2023 review process. Our values embody what is important to everyone in our school community.

In 2023, the school's enrolment was 56 students, all with a primary diagnosis of developmental delay or intellectual disability. Many of our students have additional needs that affect their learning including but not limited to autism, communication and sensory needs, and can display behaviours of concern. The school was divided into three classes each of Early Years, Middle Years and Later Years. Our Early Years unit was housed in our base rooms on the site of Coburg North Primary School, as well as one classroom at the main school site. The school's SFOE was 0.4353. The staffing profile was made up of 1 principal, 1 assistant principal, 14 teachers (11.4 EFT, which included a 0.4 Mental Health and Wellbeing Leader appointed during the year), 15 education support staff (14.2 EFT), 3 therapists (2.6 EFT; 1.0 OT and 1.6 Speech Pathologists) and 0.2 Mental Health Practitioner (Social Worker).

Progress towards strategic goals, student outcomes and student engagement

Learning

The priority area of Learning included the goal to support both those who need scaffolding and those who have thrived to continue to extend their learning, with the main action being to embed PLC inquiry cycles to drive literacy and numeracy improvement. All of the activities planned for this Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) goal under the Actions were been completed and we saw increased achievement across all learning areas as demonstrated through our main data sources, ABLES and teacher judgements against the Victorian Curriculum A-D.

The strategy of using two tutors with separate focuses (general literacy and specific communication skills) worked extremely well as we saw an increase in average scores for the Communication Profiles, which were the targets for our Strategic Plan. Other positive effects included a much higher level of sharing and collaboration between the tutors and the teachers and therapists. The tutors also reported on goals within the student reports to parents. The change to the tutoring program focus has worked well to improve both general literacy outcomes for a group of our students as well as increase the communication pathways for another cohort.

Particular professional learning across the two curriculum days in Term 3, with support from the Regional PLC manager, had the effect of skilling all teachers and staff in both the underlying strength and purpose of PLC processes and supporting future succession planning for leaders of these teams. This also fulfilled part of our PLC Link school obligations as we invited network schools to send staff to participate in these two days.

In reference to the PLC Link duties, we provided opportunities for other schools to view our practices whilst also sending our staff to

view other schools' practices.

During the second of the curriculum days for the year, new teachers and all ES staff participated in refresher training around communication, PTR, Restraint/Seclusion and SWPBS. It was extremely heartening to hear the embedded positive language in use during these sessions.

The Instructional model was being used across broader curriculum areas having the effect of an increased use of IM structure in work programs. The need for more development and take up by teachers has been highlighted in our school review, leading to deploying an acting Learning Specialist for 2024 who will take on the responsibility of driving the embedding of the Instructional Model. This will be in conjunction with extending our peer observation processes to reduce variability in our teaching.

Our four yearly review took place in term 3 and was a positive endorsement of the growth we had shown over the last School Strategic Plan (SSP). In particular, "the panel identified exemplary illustrations of the school's instructional model (IM) in practice. It was also evident that variation in the levels of understanding and use of the model existed among and within sections across the school. The panel recommended that a focus on consistently embedding the instructional model in all classes and learning areas for all students be included in the next SSP." and "Panel members agreed that the introduction of PLCs had clearly improved teaching and learning at Coburg Special Developmental School. This was evident from the review fieldwork, and through the region's appointment of the school as a PLC link school. The panel suggested continued strong implementation of PLCs be included in the next SSP."

Wellbeing

The priority area of Wellbeing included the goal to effectively mobilise available resources to support students' wellbeing and mental health, especially the most vulnerable with the main action being to develop both individual and group programs that will support the wellbeing and mental health of our students.

All of the activities under this AIP goal were completed across the year.

Enrolment in the Statewide SWPBS training was validating of the processes that we have already employed within this schoolwide framework. Current artefacts were audited across the school and matched to the training focuses and subsequently matched to our current action plan. In light of this, we began the process to apply for Bronze level accreditation. This will be validation for the embedded, and increasingly understood, positive tiered supports that allow for understanding of behaviour and increased success of 'just right learning'.

The broadening of the Welfare team to include the Mental Health Practitioner (MHP) and the Mental Health and Wellbeing Leader (MHWL) added dimension to our wellbeing supports for our students and staff. The MHP role, in particular, (which has had extended hours above funding level) has a refined and coordinated pathway which has supported a number of our more vulnerable students in collaboration with DFFH and other external, support agencies. A booklet has been created by which the specific roles are outlined and includes the referral pathways for both positions. The MHWL attended training and has worked on the development of the role and action plan around that. More work on developing the MHWL role is necessary to maximise the outputs of this position and ultimate outcomes for our teachers in mental health 'literacy'.

There is a higher level of vigilance and understanding around mental health vs disability and an added lens for the teachers when developing learning programs. This has been garnered through increased professional learning, which has also been extended to our parent community.

The school has access to the many free external supports and programs offered through the Department's Mental Health menu whilst specific funding for future programs will be available in 2024.

Again, the School Review validated the school's developed culture around mental health and wellbeing as it examined the question "To what extent has the school's approach to student mental health and wellbeing been effective?" In response, "the panel found that the range of initiatives introduced during the SSP period, and during the pandemic, had effectively promoted student mental health and wellbeing. The school's culture, comprising its goals and values, its practices, and various artefacts clearly demonstrated a child centred approach. The school was exemplary in its responsive, tiered and contextualised approaches and strong relationships that supported student learning, wellbeing and inclusion."

Engagement

Considering 2023 was the first year since the beginning of the pandemic that we suffered no further lockdowns nor periods of remote learning, it was very pleasing to see the average number of absences fall to the lowest level in the last four years (26.7 in 2023 down from 41.2 in 2022). Students generally demonstrated a higher level of engagement and happiness to be reconnected to the school and peers.

All of the actions within this goal were completed.

Although many facets of student voice and agency have been developed across the last four years, focussing on this goal in 2023

closes the cycle on this current strategic plan.

A series of specific, staff professional learning on student voice, presented by the Student Voice coordinator, allowed for teachers to build on their capacity in the area of student voice and agency. The actual sessions highlighted the positive change in attitude to non verbal students across the last four years, with a determination in all staff to 'hear' and acknowledge every child's voice and support their agency in learning. The school review process acknowledged the use of rubrics as being a clear indicator of promoting student agency. The communication team collaborated with the Student Voice coordinator to promote student voice within the curriculum.

A more formal structure of student leadership group/s also came from this series of professional learning, with working parties developing a range of student roles, including a junior school representative council (SRC). The SRC members began by having a leading role in our fortnightly assemblies. These strategies will continue to improve and increase the students' ability to affect positive change across the school and its practices.

The highlight of student leadership was one student representative meeting and showing the Minister of Education around are current school site in preparation for the move to a purpose built, modern and permanent buildings.

The review panel confirmed that "a key school and community highlight was the focus on communication during the SSP period. Various initiatives designed to support students in developing competent, autonomous communication skills were implemented.

These included:

- increased use of Pragmatic Organisation Dynamic Display (PODD) communication books by staff and parents
- personalised student PODD books
- parent engagement in workshops on using PODD books
- increased use of Assistive Listening Devices (ALDs) and visuals for communication.
- The panel agreed that utilising varied and individualised communication practices and devices had promoted access for all students. This access had also promoted positive student outcomes, including:
 - improved speaking and listening outcomes for students
 - fostering of students' voice and choice
 - increased engagement and reduction in instances of more challenging behaviour.

The panel observed the initiatives and discussed the focus with staff, students, and parents. There was agreement amongst these groups that it had produced good outcomes for students.

Actions contributing to enhanced student autonomy and voice included:

- students allowed choice over their subjects and learning, acknowledging their interests in designing learning
- expansion of work education elective options to suit student interests
- the successful work education Café Coburg program – expanded to 5 days a week in the SSP
- differentiation in students' learning, daily practices and student choice
- student leaders in a range of areas including 'PODD Police', Student Captains, Playground Toy monitors
- development and increased use of an Instructional Model to improve learning outcomes.

Fieldwork discussions confirmed the school's opinion that student 'readiness to learn' had increased."

Other highlights from the school year

A major highlight of 2023, was the BLOOM Festival. This idea formed out of a collaboration with Polyglot Theatre Company and was led by Nadia Welsh, our art teacher. In this, she supported the initial submission to access the grant allowing Polyglot Theatre Company to develop a strong relationship with our students and community as they built the concept of BLOOM; a celebration of our past and present whilst looking forward to a shining future in our new facilities. It was a true celebration of our school, highlighting the strength of our community at Coburg SDS...it was a "goodbye" to our current site, acknowledging the history, whilst looking forward to entering our new future and the many possibilities that lie ahead as a school and community.

In acknowledging the efforts of the Polyglot Team, I penned:

"Thank you all for your input, for your diligence, for your compassion when working with our students, for your enthusiasm, for your organisation, for your talents, for your never-ending store of energy, for your willingness to become part of our community at Coburg SDS!! We will have an enduring sense of wonderment thanks to Polyglot Theatre's practices and interactions! You manifest your vision of 'advocating for the right of all children to experience arts and culture and promote the importance of young people as discerning audience from the earliest years.' We were not just audience during this special collaboration, but willing and eager participants and co-constructors!!"

It was truly a highlight of the year.

Financial performance

The financial performance of the school was very strong over the year, with a final operating surplus of \$121,014. As with previous years, this surplus allows us to draw across a considerable amount from credit to cash to cover the significant cost of replacement staff throughout the year. It also shores up our program budgets that support the school's maintenance.

We again received funding of \$1700 through the Early Years Koori Literacy and Numeracy initiative, which allowed for an extra staff member one day per week across a term for extra support to one of our students.

We extended the license agreement with Northshore Tutoring School for an extra year with no change to their fee of \$4000 per year. With no lockdowns across the year, the tutoring school was able to resume on a regular timetable.

The Sporting School Grants of \$3000 cumulative across the year were once again able to be used for sporting groups, such as the football and tennis clinics, to come onsite and work with our students. We were also able to purchase more equipment for the PE program.

Equity funding of \$17,823 was an increase from the previous year. A significant part of this funding was used for professional development of staff in the areas of curriculum and learning as well as Mental Health and Wellbeing. This included two curriculum days dedicated to improving our knowledge of, and strengthening our practices in, our Professional Learning Communities. We also used \$4000 of equity funds in our initial foray into the Menu Health Menu prior to receiving specific funds for this purpose in 2024. Wellbeing Boost money of \$15000 was utilised to increase time for the Mental Health Practitioner position from 0.4 (two days) to 0.8 (four days).

PLC Link school funding was used to support a range of Professional Learning that we presented to other schools, whilst we made a cash to credit transfer of \$35,000 that covered average 0.2 (1 day) of Sally's duties as PLC Link Coordinator.

For more detailed information regarding our school please visit our website at
<https://www.coburgsds.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 56 students were enrolled at this school in 2023, 12 female and 44 male.

43 percent of students had English as an additional language and NDP 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).

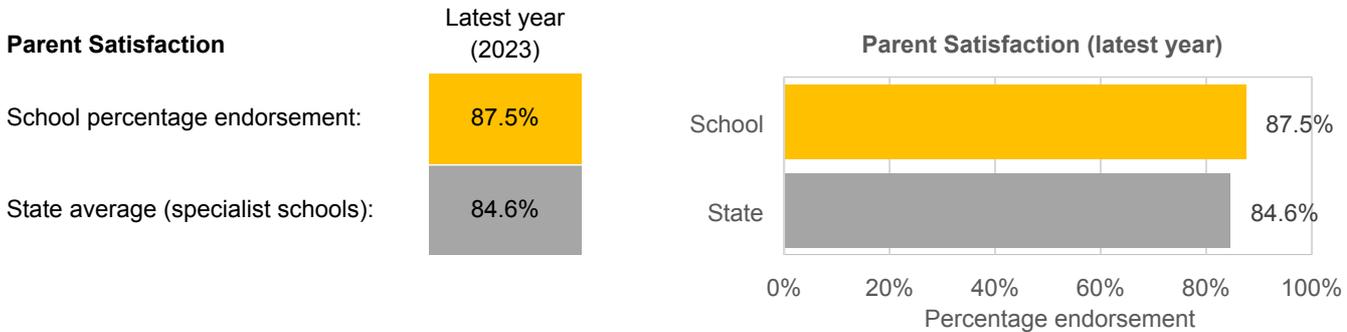
SFOE is a measure of socio-educational disadvantage of a school, based on educational and employment characteristics of the parents/carers of students enrolled at the school. Possible SFOE band values are: Low, Low-Medium, Medium and High. A 'Low' band represents a low level of socio-educational disadvantage,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

This school's SFOE band value is: Medium

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.

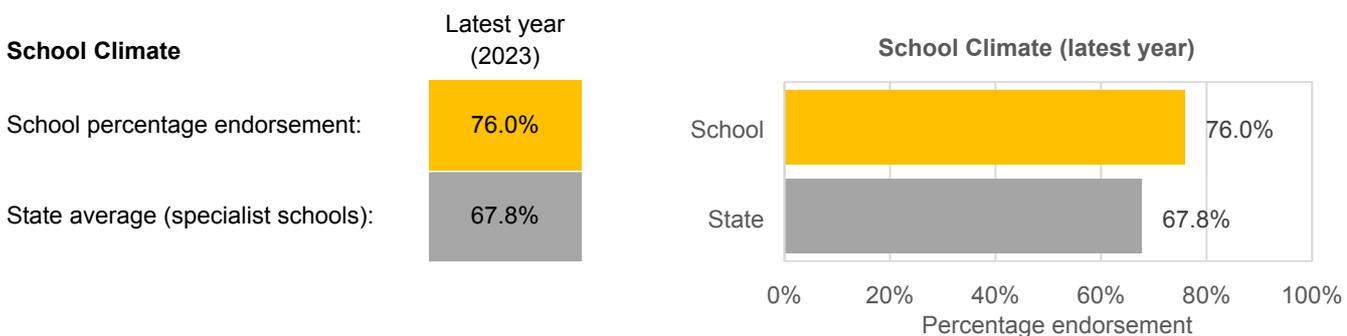


School Staff Survey

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.



LEARNING

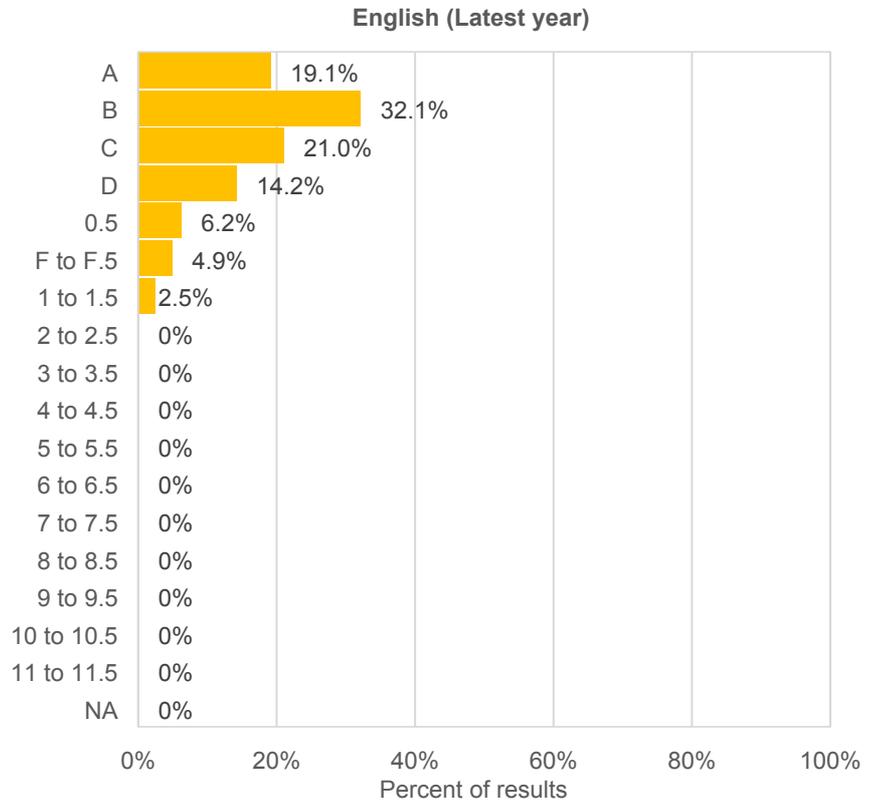
Teacher Judgement of student achievement

Percent of results at each achievement level in English and Mathematics.

English

Achievement Level	Latest year (2023)
A	19.1%
B	32.1%
C	21.0%
D	14.2%
0.5	6.2%
F to F.5	4.9%
1 to 1.5	2.5%
2 to 2.5	NDA
3 to 3.5	NDA
4 to 4.5	NDA
5 to 5.5	NDA
6 to 6.5	NDA
7 to 7.5	NDA
8 to 8.5	NDA
9 to 9.5	NDA
10 to 10.5	NDA
11 to 11.5	NDA
NA	NDA

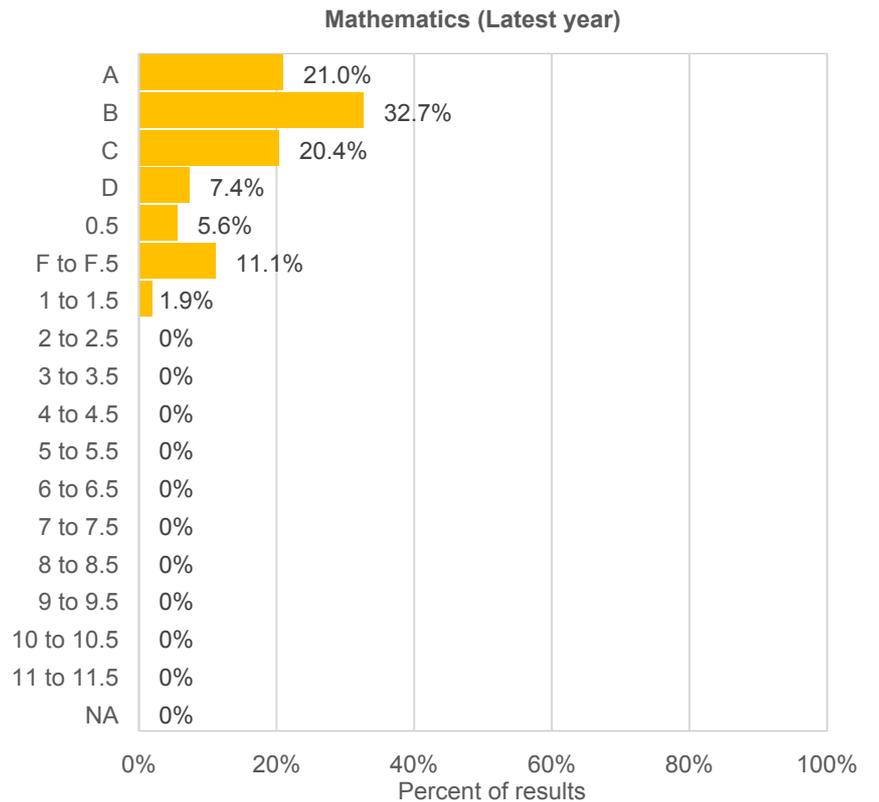
Achievement Level



Mathematics

Achievement Level	Latest year (2023)
A	21.0%
B	32.7%
C	20.4%
D	7.4%
0.5	5.6%
F to F.5	11.1%
1 to 1.5	1.9%
2 to 2.5	NDA
3 to 3.5	NDA
4 to 4.5	NDA
5 to 5.5	NDA
6 to 6.5	NDA
7 to 7.5	NDA
8 to 8.5	NDA
9 to 9.5	NDA
10 to 10.5	NDA
11 to 11.5	NDA
NA	NDA

Achievement Level



ENGAGEMENT

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.

Student Absence	2020	2021	2022	2023	4-year average
School average number of absence days:	39.6	27.7	41.2	26.7	33.8

Students exiting to further studies or full-time employment

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

Note: This measure refers to data from the previous calendar year. Data excludes destinations recorded as 'Unknown'.

Student Exits	2019	2020	2021	2022	4-year average
School percent of students with positive destinations:	NDP	NDP	NDP	NDP	100.0%

Financial Performance and Position

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE - OPERATING STATEMENT SUMMARY FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 DECEMBER, 2023

Revenue	Actual
Student Resource Package	\$2,928,267
Government Provided DET Grants	\$503,703
Government Grants Commonwealth	\$8,362
Government Grants State	\$0
Revenue Other	\$17,766
Locally Raised Funds	\$32,246
Capital Grants	\$0
Total Operating Revenue	\$3,490,343

Equity ¹	Actual
Equity (Social Disadvantage)	\$17,823
Equity (Catch Up)	\$0
Transition Funding	\$0
Equity (Social Disadvantage – Extraordinary Growth)	\$0
Equity Total	\$17,823

Expenditure	Actual
Student Resource Package ²	\$2,810,217
Adjustments	\$0
Books & Publications	\$666
Camps/Excursions/Activities	\$10,434
Communication Costs	\$2,411
Consumables	\$33,202
Miscellaneous Expense ³	\$7,745
Professional Development	\$11,859
Equipment/Maintenance/Hire	\$55,746
Property Services	\$79,070
Salaries & Allowances ⁴	\$140,886
Support Services	\$185,211
Trading & Fundraising	\$3,787
Motor Vehicle Expenses	\$7,677
Travel & Subsistence	\$483
Utilities	\$19,936
Total Operating Expenditure	\$3,369,329
Net Operating Surplus/-Deficit	\$121,014
Asset Acquisitions	\$0

- (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 16 Feb 2024 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 2023

Funds available	Actual
High Yield Investment Account	\$160,250
Official Account	\$15,362
Other Accounts	\$0
Total Funds Available	\$175,611

Financial Commitments	Actual
Operating Reserve	\$83,045
Other Recurrent Expenditure	\$2,079
Provision Accounts	\$0
Funds Received in Advance	\$0
School Based Programs	\$37,000
Beneficiary/Memorial Accounts	\$0
Cooperative Bank Account	\$0
Funds for Committees/Shared Arrangements	\$0
Repayable to the Department	\$0
Asset/Equipment Replacement < 12 months	\$22,000
Capital - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months	\$0
Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months	\$75,320
Asset/Equipment Replacement > 12 months	\$0
Capital - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months	\$0
Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months	\$0
Total Financial Commitments	\$219,443

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.