

2020 Annual Report to The School Community



School Name: Bell Primary School (4309)

- 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 30 April 2021 at 12:08 PM by David Twite (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 03 May 2021 at 10:05 AM by Amber Griffiths (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

Bell Primary School is a co-educational government primary school situated in Preston, 9km from the Melbourne CBD. The school has long history of providing education in the Preston community since its establishment in 1928.

Our essential learning focus is to ensure students are literate, numerate and curious with a philosophy that encourages and supports students to operate independently and collaboratively, to be valued and value others, and to take pride and pleasure in participation and achievement. The school vision - 'Bell Primary school is a caring community that fosters a love of learning in young people. At school and beyond, students are confident to think critically and empowered to thrive in a rapidly evolving world,' guides all decision making and is underpinned by our school values - Resilience, Respect, Curiosity, Creativity and Collaboration, which establish the expectations for the attitudes and behaviour of all Bell Community members.

At the end of 2020, a total of 504 students were enrolled, 240 female and 264 male. There were 22 classes operating, comprised of 3 x Prep, 3 x Grade 1s, 4 x Grade 2s, 3 x Grade 3s, 3 x Grade 4s, 3 x Grade 5s and 3 x Grade 6. Specialist classes for Visual Arts, Music, Physical Education and Languages (Italian) are delivered weekly to all grades. The staffing profile was made up of 1 Principal, 1 Assistant Principal, 2 Learning Specialists (Teaching & Learning, Engagement & Wellbeing), 35 teachers (32.2 EFT) and 8 (5.8 EFT) education support staff. In 2020 there were no staff members of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage. The school's overall Socio-Economic Profile is high, based on Student Family Occupation and Education index (.082). English is the predominant language spoken at home, with 4% of enrolments EAL (English as an Additional Language).

Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO)

In 2020, Bell's Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) focused on implementation of Key Improvement Strategies (KIS) related to the FISO dimensions of Building Communities, Building Practice Excellence, and Building Leadership Teams. The impact of COVID and subsequent rounds of implementing flexible and remote learning resulted in modifications to some AIP actions to suit the immediate needs of the school and community.

Progress towards the school's AIP and KIS during the 2020 school year included:

- Streamlined communication through the launch of a new school website and further implementation of Compass to improve access to current school documentation.
- Review of Child Safe, health and wellbeing policies including Student Engagement and Wellbeing, Bullying Prevention, ICT Acceptable Use and the establishment of Video Conferencing Guidelines, based on immediate need.
- Professional learning provided to update new or existing staff on Berry Street Education Model (BSEM) domains covered in 2019/2020, as well as staff undertaking day 3 of training.
- Implementation of consistent team planning documents developed and utilised by teaching teams to support collaborative planning at a term/weekly overview level, although modified to suit flexible and remote learning.
- Timetabling structures, while modified, maintained opportunities for teaching teams to plan together on a weekly basis during both onsite and flexible and remote learning, with the support of the Teaching and Learning Specialist. This also included collaborative planning days for teams each term.
- The whole school assessment schedule was modified each term to align with remote and flexible learning. This was done in consultation with teams through the team leaders.
- Modifications to professional learning priorities and the subsequent meeting schedule to align with the needs of staff during remote and flexible learning. During this time, teachers' expertise was utilised to upskill other members of staff, particularly in the areas of digital technology, student feedback and maintaining assessment data. Staff capacity was enhanced in priority areas not immediately relating to the AIP, however directly relevant to remote and flexible learning including Google Classroom, Video conferencing, etc.
- Greater clarity of staff roles and responsibilities including leadership, team based and additional roles

To support implementation of these strategies, the leadership team met in an ongoing manner to continually revise, adjust and communicate changes in school operations and teaching/learning programs due to COVID.

Achievement

2020 required staff, students and families adapt to a new way of schooling. Throughout the various rounds of flexible and remote learning, the school aligned all year levels within a consistent model of lesson delivery by adopting Google Classroom. A weekly overview of learning tasks continued to be communicated with parents/carers in line with DET's guidelines, with daily adjustments made where necessary.

For students and families in the junior school, flexible and remote learning required additional parental support to navigate the digital aspect of lesson delivery, however feedback suggested that this improved over time as video recordings and voice overs of key concepts were introduced to support written instructions. Senior school students who were already familiar with the Google Classroom platform appeared to more readily transition to flexible and remote learning as a result of increased levels of independence and digital literacy skills.

Group conferences were introduced early into flexible and remote learning. Feedback from parents/carers and staff suggested that this additional form of personal connection was vital for student understanding, engagement and motivation in learning. In Term 3, adjustments were made to include a daily morning meeting with the aim to maintain connections between the class and teacher, as well as communicating the day's teaching and learning tasks. In addition to the morning meeting, students were included in at least two additional small group meetings, related to a particular curriculum area.

At the commencement of 2020, the school's approach to Intervention and supporting students below expected level in Literacy and/or Numeracy was refined. During remote and flexible learning, intervention sessions continued with identified students who were learning onsite and contact established with families to further support those students who were learning from home.

Student Support Group meetings for students supported through the Program for Students with a Disability were conducted with families virtually during this time and learning goals adjusted. These students were provided with additional support and resources through video conferencing with Education Support staff.

Based on assessment throughout the period of remote and flexible learning and during Term 4, the academic outcomes of students has varied amongst individuals, classes and year levels. A number of factors can be attributed to the varied student outcomes including- availability of 1:1 learning support at home, age and independence levels of students and their ability to self-direct their learning.

As we transitioned back to school, staff planned teaching and learning opportunities that re-established regular routines for students whilst resetting the expectations of the classroom and rebuilding relationships between students and their teacher.

During Term 4, school operations were aligned with DET's identified priorities for students and staff including:

- Priority 1 – Mental health and wellbeing: mobilising supports to prioritise the mental health, safety and wellbeing of every student and member of staff.
- Priority 2 – Learning: ensuring those who had fallen behind could catch up and those who had progressed were stretched in their learning. Literacy and numeracy remained a focus, with extensive assessment undertaken to gauge student understandings during remote and flexible learning.
- Priority 3 – Transitions processes were reviewed to ensure end-of-year and beginning-of-year transitions occurred as successfully as possible with a smaller number of adjustments made to class groupings than previously.

NAPLAN was cancelled in 2020 and was therefore not able to be used as a measure of performance. Despite the challenges of remote and flexible learning, staff survey data showed an increase in positive responses to the overall school climate at 75% which was slightly below similar schools and State average. Two key factors showed significant improvement with collective efficacy at 83%, which is above State average and now only slightly below similar schools; guaranteed and viable curriculum showed an increase to 73%, however still remained below State average and similar

schools.

It is anticipated that the key aspects of collective efficacy and guaranteed and viable curriculum will remain a focus following the Term 1 school review leading into the development of a new strategic plan.

Engagement

Maintaining high levels of engagement during 2020 was a challenge like no other with the COVID pandemic's disruptive effect on student participation and motivation. The challenge was ongoing during onsite and home learning phases with the school maintaining an adaptive approach using online tools including G-Suite (Google educational platforms) to ensure children and their parents/carers stayed connected, as much as possible, during remote and flexible learning.

High levels of daily connections were maintained during remote and flexible learning with an increased use of video conferencing including morning meetings, regular group conferences and 1:1 meetings and phone calls, where necessary. A steady refinement in Google Slide lessons also saw most lessons incorporating either video demonstrations, voice overs or interactive links to increase engagement and improve understanding of learning intentions and instructions. Innovative feedback techniques were trialled to motivate students to be persistent and sometimes excel when learning from home.

Upon returning to onsite learning each time, there was a collective effort from teaching teams to reconnect peers and to focus on social and collaborative learning whilst still adhering to COVID restrictions.

A range of feedback mechanisms including DET and school based-surveys, pointed to some constructive outcomes for students and parents/carers amongst the many and significant challenges. The meant the school's approach was continuing being refined to ensure the needs of whole community (students, parents/carers and staff) were met where practical. Anecdotally, the overwhelming majority of parents/carers showed great appreciation for staff efforts and all members of the school community felt relieved and reconnected once the routines of onsite learning recommenced in Term 4.

The DET parent and student surveys were conducted with some variations in questions from previous years due to the impacts of remote and flexible learning. Parent general satisfaction remained similar to 2019 at 81% which matched State average, whereas school communication improved from 82% to 89% from the previous year, this compared favourably to the State average of 84%. Average student absences was slightly better than similar schools (Bell-7.9, similar schools-8.2) and was well below the State average of 13.8.

Maintaining strong and interactive connections with parents/carers to support daily learning is expected to a focus following the Term 1 school review leading into the development of a new strategic plan.

Wellbeing

The school continued to focus on building a whole school approach to student wellbeing with further steps forward in rolling out the Berry Street Educational Model (BSEM) and integrating the School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) initiative into the Start-Up program. Both are designed to create proactive strategies and common language across the school to assist the social and emotional development of all students, as well as set clear behavioural expectations using the school values as an anchor.

Interruptions to the reform agenda were evident due to COVID restrictions. However, the focus on mental health and wellbeing for the entire school community (students, parents/carers and staff) became the highest priority as the year unfolded.

During remote and flexible learning some of the BSEM approaches were adapted for online teaching including morning circles, ready to learn strategies and positive primers. Teams followed DET directions and delivered an extensive range of wellbeing lessons when students were at home, as well as when transitioning back to school. This ensured students felt supported in these difficult and uncertain times. Both formal and informal student feedback was used to

implement wellbeing activities to target the emotional and social needs of students at the various year levels.

BSEM training for the third domain was completed before COVID hit, however the final training day for domain 5 Character, was re-scheduled for early 2021. New or returning staff were still able to complete catch up professional learning on the BSEM domains of Body and Relationship via on-line training. This meant all staff were up to date by the middle of the year, ensuring consistent understanding of key aspects from 4 of the 5 domains.

DET parent and student surveys showed some shifts from the previous year with student school connectedness slightly lower (2%) from the previous year at 68%; below similar schools and the State average. Managing bullying from a student perspective improved to 72% and closer to similar schools and State average, whereas parents' positive responses continued to improve over recent years to a 2020 high of 81% which matched similar schools and State average. The positive responses to 'not experiencing bullying' also improved significantly to reach 91%, well above similar schools and State average.

The same data sets broken down into year levels showed a pattern of the Year 6s scoring lower positive responses than the Year 4 or 5 students. These point in time results reflected the general observations and discussions with the senior students on the collective sense of loss for the many final year traditions and special events during COVID restrictions.

Clear highlights for the Year 6 students and teachers was when the school re-scheduled the Grade 6 camp late in the year and re-fashioned the Graduation Ceremony to a week-long event at the school once many restrictions were eased.

The final steps to fully develop and implement a whole school wellbeing framework will be a key improvement strategy within the new strategic plan. This will combine BESM, SWPBS and the Respectful Relationships program into a school-wide social and emotional curriculum. It is anticipated that building a partnership approach with parents/carers to support student mental health and wellbeing will be an outcome of the school review process.

In addition, it is anticipated that a future focus on student goal setting, expanding leadership opportunities and developing student voice and agency in learning will assist in having a positive impact on students' sense of connectedness to the school and their learning. A review of the school-based student survey to include questions centred around student pride, belonging and attendance at school will also enable opportunities for teachers to unpack data with students and identify actions and improvement strategies that can be taken at a classroom or whole school level.

Financial performance and position

Bell Primary, like many other schools in 2020, was impacted by the COVID pandemic with significant changes to budgeted revenues and expenditures. Revenues were down on budget, particularly in relation to locally raised funds including camps, excursions, hire of facilities and fundraising. Offsetting this, corresponding expenses in relation to camps and excursions along with reductions in casual relief teaching costs as well as planned spending of fundraising resulted in the school finishing with a surplus for 2020.

The school has total funds available of \$282,133 heading into 2021 with \$222,134 financially committed (including \$88,000 for capital works and a \$95,739 operating reserve).

Towards the end of 2020, the school received a \$7.2million dollar grant from the State government to build a community gymnasium/hall and continue upgrades and modernisation to the main building.

For more detailed information regarding our school please visit our website at
www.bellps.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 511 students were enrolled at this school in 2020, 247 female and 264 male.

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

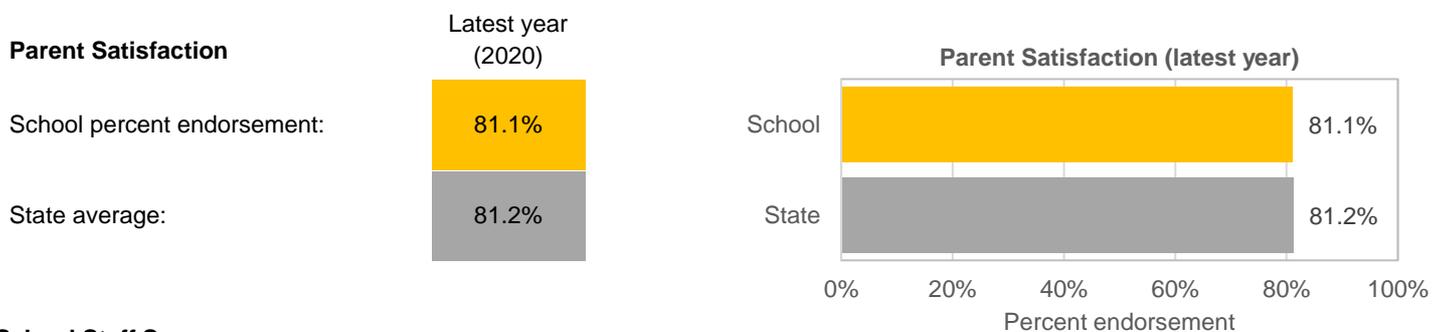
Possible socio-economic band values are: Low, Low-Medium, Medium and High.

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.

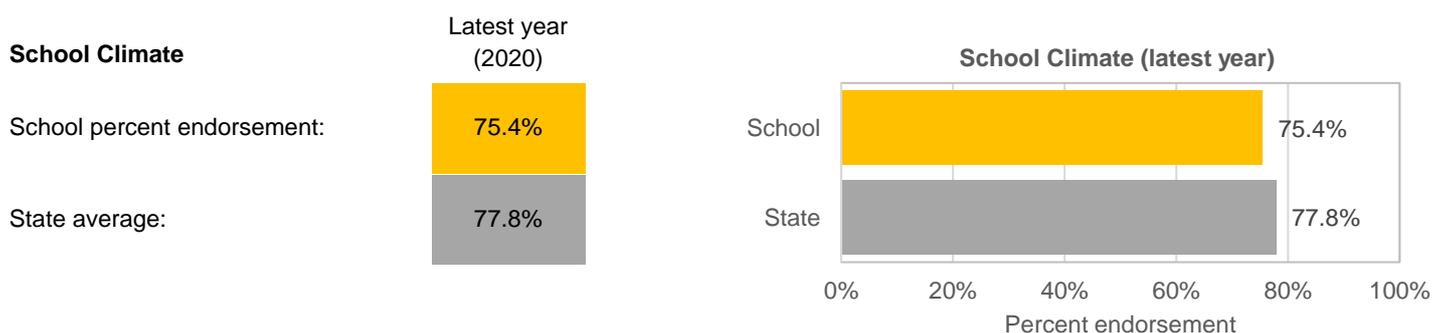


School Staff Survey

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:

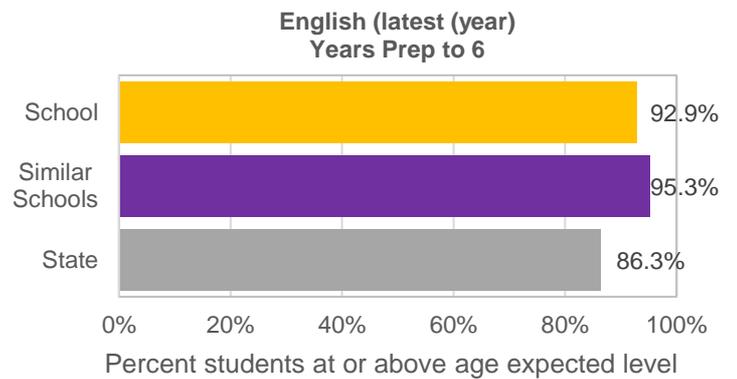
92.9%

Similar Schools average:

95.3%

State average:

86.3%



Mathematics Years Prep to 6

Latest year
(2020)

School percent of students at or above age expected standards:

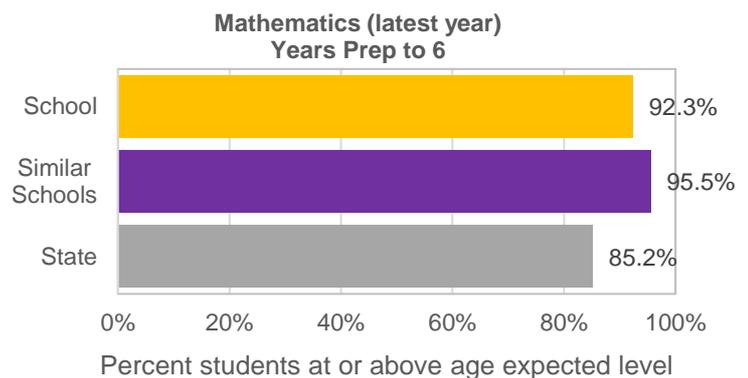
92.3%

Similar Schools average:

95.5%

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

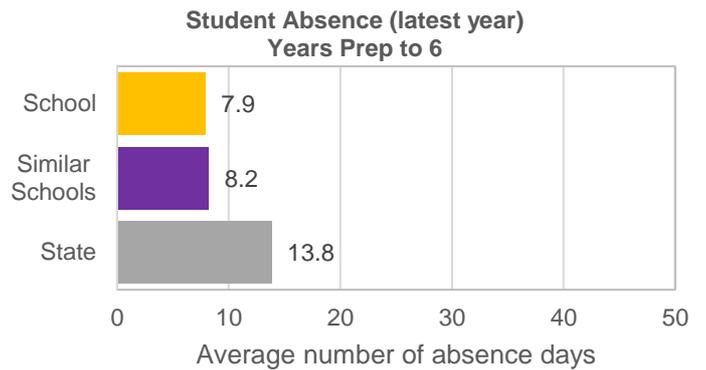
Key: ‘Similar Schools’ are a group of Victorian government schools that are like this school, taking into account the school’s socioeconomic background of students, the number of non-English speaking students and the size and location of the school.

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:	7.9	12.1
Similar Schools average:	8.2	12.3
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%	96%	96%	96%	96%	97%	96%

WELLBEING

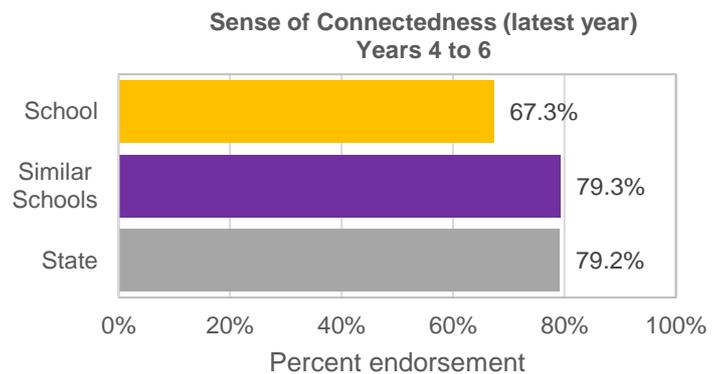
Key: ‘Similar Schools’ are a group of Victorian government schools that are like this school, taking into account the school’s socioeconomic background of students, the number of non-English speaking students and the size and location of the school.

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:	67.3%	69.3%
Similar Schools average:	79.3%	79.2%
State average:	79.2%	81.0%



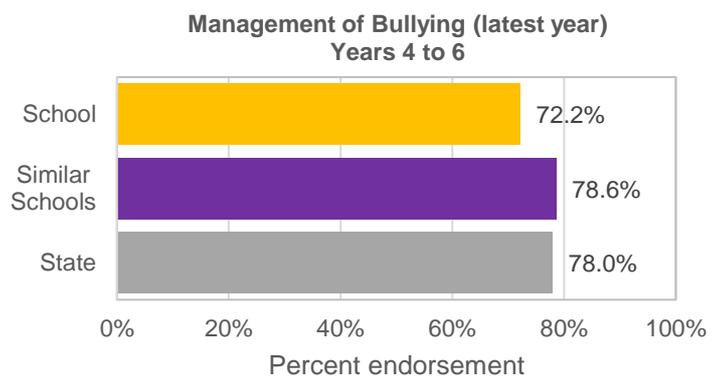
Due to lower participation rates and differences in collection methodology in 2020, data are often not comparable with previous years or within similar school groups. Care should be taken when interpreting these results.

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:	72.2%	69.0%
Similar Schools average:	78.6%	79.6%
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	\$4,070,062
Government Provided DET Grants	\$407,444
Government Grants Commonwealth	\$25,095
Government Grants State	\$14,193
Revenue Other	\$12,454
Locally Raised Funds	\$252,810
Capital Grants	\$5,650
Total Operating Revenue	\$4,787,709

Equity ¹	Actual
Equity (Social Disadvantage)	\$7,231
Equity (Catch Up)	NDA
Transition Funding	NDA
Equity (Social Disadvantage – Extraordinary Growth)	NDA
Equity Total	\$7,231

Expenditure	Actual
Student Resource Package ²	\$3,885,806
Adjustments	NDA
Books & Publications	\$2,045
Camps/Excursions/Activities	\$53,039
Communication Costs	\$3,825
Consumables	\$79,267
Miscellaneous Expense ³	\$19,375
Professional Development	\$5,376
Equipment/Maintenance/Hire	\$134,485
Property Services	\$106,125
Salaries & Allowances ⁴	\$90,762
Support Services	\$113,906
Trading & Fundraising	\$24,827
Motor Vehicle Expenses	NDA
Travel & Subsistence	NDA
Utilities	\$30,243
Total Operating Expenditure	\$4,549,082
Net Operating Surplus/-Deficit	\$232,977
Asset Acquisitions	\$58,027

- (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	\$237,282
Official Account	\$30,270
Other Accounts	\$14,581
Total Funds Available	\$282,133

Financial Commitments	Actual
Operating Reserve	\$95,739
Other Recurrent Expenditure	NDA
Provision Accounts	NDA
Funds Received in Advance	NDA
School Based Programs	\$17,000
Beneficiary/Memorial Accounts	NDA
Cooperative Bank Account	NDA
Funds for Committees/Shared Arrangements	\$12,860
Repayable to the Department	NDA
Asset/Equipment Replacement < 12 months	NDA
Capital - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months	\$88,000
Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months	\$8,535
Asset/Equipment Replacement > 12 months	NDA
Capital - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months	NDA
Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months	NDA
Total Financial Commitments	\$222,134

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.