

2025 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 \(VIT\)](#)
- 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 01 May 2026 at 09:09 PM by Emma Heywood (Principal)

- As executive officer of the school council, I attest that this 2025 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 04 May 2026 at 10:25 AM by Emma Heywood (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
 - responses to the General Satisfaction area of the Parent/Caregiver/Guardian Opinion Survey
 - school staff responses to the School Climate area of the School Staff Survey
- Learning
 - English and Mathematics for Teacher Judgements against the curriculum
 - Reading and Numeracy proficiency levels for National Literacy and Numeracy tests (NAPLAN)
 - Reading and Numeracy relative growth for National Literacy and Numeracy tests (NAPLAN)
- Wellbeing
 - student responses to the Sense of Connectedness area in the Student Attitudes to School Survey
 - student responses to the Management of Bullying area in the Student Attitudes to School Survey
- Engagement
 - average absence days per student
 - student attendance rate

Key terms used in the Performance Summary are defined below:

Similar Schools

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.

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.

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 disabilities 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’).

Updates to the ‘Performance Summary’ in the 2025 Annual Report

NAPLAN relative growth data has been included in the 2025 Performance Summary as there is sufficient data available for the comparison.

About Our School

School context

Bell Primary School is a co-educational government primary school situated in Preston, 9km north of the CBD. The school has a long history of providing quality education in the Preston community since 1928. Our essential learning focus is to ensure students are literate, numerate, curious and caring. Our philosophy 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. It 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.

To accommodate the 443 students in 2025, there were 19 classes, comprised of 3 x Prep, 3 x Grade 1s, 3 x Grade 2s, 3 x Grade 3s, 2 x Grade 4s, 3 x Grade 5s and 2 x Grade 6. Specialist classes for Visual Arts, Music, Physical Education, Languages (Italian) and STEAM were delivered weekly to all grades. The staffing profile was made up of 1 Principal, 1 Assistant Principal, 2 Learning Specialists (Teaching & Learning, Engagement & Wellbeing), 31 full or part time teachers (23.9 EFT) and 11 full or part time education support staff (8.0 EFT).

Progress towards strategic goals, student outcomes and student engagement

Learning

Throughout 2025, key improvement teams focused on strengthening curriculum planning and alignment with the Victorian Curriculum 2.0. A Writing Scope and Sequence was developed to support consistent teaching and learning across year levels, while the Reading Scope and Sequence was reviewed and refined to ensure alignment with updated curriculum expectations.

The Inquiry (KIT) team continued to develop a draft Scope and Sequence structured around the key lenses of sustainability, identity, community and innovation and change, with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives embedded throughout. The Wellbeing Scope and Sequence, updated to align with the Victorian Curriculum 2.0, has been consistently implemented to support the planning and delivery of weekly social and emotional learning.

Whole-staff professional learning further supported the implementation of the Mathematics 2.0 Curriculum, with a focus on the use of rich assessment tasks and new approaches to assessment/reporting against progression points. Professional learning also centred on High

Impact Teaching Strategies (HITS), particularly differentiation and effective feedback, with an emphasis on the development and use of student learning goals.

The implementation of school improvement initiatives across Literacy, Mathematics, and Wellbeing/Engagement was enabled through team-based Improvement Cycles, coaching/mentoring and related peer observations. These approaches supported a focus on increasing consistency in enacting school priorities and embedding agreed teaching practices.

A revised Professional Learning and Performance (PLP) process was also introduced to guide staff professional growth and alignment with whole-school expectations. Individual and team-based goals included focus on defined non-negotiables related to teaching practice, collaborative planning and work program documentation.

Student achievement data indicates that teacher judgements of students performing at or above expected levels in English and Mathematics from Prep to Grade 6 remain comparable to similar schools and above state averages. NAPLAN results in Reading, Writing, and Numeracy continue to exceed state averages; however, the proportion of students achieving in the Strong or Exceeding categories is slightly lower (by approximately 2–5%) than that of similar schools overall.

Improving student growth remains a key focus, as identified through the Term 4 school review and supported by NAPLAN growth data. This includes a continued emphasis on increasing the proportion of students achieving medium to high growth across key learning areas.

Wellbeing

The school continued to implement Disability Inclusion reforms, with a focus on ensuring classroom practice and work programs demonstrate evidence of student learning at differentiated levels, supported by targeted adjustments, strategies and resources. The Disability Inclusion (DI) Leader worked closely with staff to establish and document reasonable adjustments for individual students as the school progressed towards Disability Inclusion Profile applications. Ongoing professional learning supported this work, including targeted training for the DI Learning Specialist to strengthen understanding of the profile process and required documentation, as well as a broader focus on improving the consistent documentation of differentiation and adjustments for all students.

Two staff members were trained as Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) leaders, supporting the implementation of targeted Tier 2 programs, *Peaceful Kids* and *Social Stencil*. These programs provided evidence-based support for early intervention and the promotion of positive mental health and wellbeing through targeted small-group interventions.

Implementation has been strengthened through clear timetabling structures, collaborative student identification processes and parent/carer information sessions and follow-up. This enabled more targeted support to be delivered in partnership with families.

In 2025, the school's Attitudes to School Survey results for the factors Sense of Connectedness and Managing Bullying were above both similar schools and the state average, with an improvement on the four-year average. This indicates sustained positive student engagement and connection to school, as well as a continued positive perception of the school's approach to supporting students and addressing bullying behaviours.

Engagement

During 2025, the school continued to offer a broad range of special events and extracurricular activities that complemented core learning, including camps, excursions, and additional opportunities across the arts, sport, leadership, and sustainability.

Strengthening student connectedness remained a key focus, with a range of cross-age House events and lunchtime clubs providing alternative play and engagement opportunities. Environmental initiatives were further enhanced through the development of a composting system and the continued involvement of sustainability representatives from Grades 2–6. Students engaged in authentic learning experiences through environmental audits and contributed to the planning and development of the biodiversity garden.

The Grade 6 leadership program was further consolidated, with a high level of collaboration across student teams working on projects that enhanced the school experience in meaningful ways. In addition, opportunities were provided for students without formal leadership roles to develop legacy projects, enabling them to plan for a positive and lasting contribution to the school.

In 2025, the school's average absence rate remained below both similar schools and the state average within the specific year and across the four-year average.

To maintain high levels of community engagement and participation in extra-curricular activities, a 2026/2027 Calendar of Events was developed, with input from parents/carers and staff across key focus areas.

Other highlights from the school year

There were many positive actions and outcomes during 2025 ranging from upgrades to facilities, celebrations of learning and community events, and other core learning and wellbeing initiatives. However, the following are considered significant highlights:

1. A key highlight of 2025 was the full-year utilisation of the school's new gymnasium and Music room, which significantly enhanced both Physical Education and Music classroom programs and community engagement. Beyond the school day, the spaces also served as a valuable community asset, hosting a range of events and activities that strengthened connections between the school and the wider community.
2. Another highlight of 2025 was the successful production of *The Great Primary School Mystery*, which showcased the creativity, confidence and collaboration of students across the school. The performance provided students with valuable opportunities to develop skills in the performing arts, while fostering teamwork and a strong sense of school pride. The production was well supported by staff and families, further strengthening community engagement.
3. A further highlight of 2025 was the development of the Indigenous biodiversity garden, which provided an authentic, hands-on learning environment for students to connect with sustainability and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives. The project involved students in the design

and planting of native species and will be used as an outdoor learning space to foster a deeper understanding of local ecosystems and environmental stewardship.

Financial performance

At the end of 2025, the school held \$473,491 in available funds against commitments of \$479,535 (including an Operating Reserve of \$177,901). The variance from the ARC commitments reflects the inclusion of family credits, upcoming payments and a credit-to-cash transfer relating to the assignment of funds from the DI Tier 2 subprogram to Staffing. This created a shortfall entering 2026, which will be managed through the next budget and ongoing finance reviews.

The school initiated a uniform-supplier review as the existing contract was due to expire later in the year. Three providers submitted EOIs, which were evaluated alongside product samples and a parent survey on cost, quality, location and ESG priorities. Following this process, the school elected to retain the current supplier, PSW.

Agency staffing exceeded budget expectations due to extended staff leave, long-service leave requiring coverage, limited CRT availability, and the need to maintain stable learning programs. Some costs are later reimbursed through short-term leave claims and Disability & Inclusion Tier 2 funding, so not all expenditure is a permanent cash outlay.

Hired equipment costs were also higher than budgeted because last year's budget only covered performance and graduation needs. It did not include the monthly gym-sweeper rental or landscaping equipment hire for the biodiversity garden. These additional, unfactored items pushed total hired-equipment expenditure above expectations.

**For more detailed information regarding our school please visit our website at
<https://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 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 443 students were enrolled at this school in 2025, 217 female and 225 male. 4% had English as an additional language and 2% 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 **Low**.

Parent Satisfaction Summary

The percentage endorsement by parents on their General School Satisfaction, as reported in the annual Parent/Caregiver/Guardian Opinion Survey. Percent endorsement indicates the percent of positive responses (agree or strongly agree) from parents who responded to the survey.

		2025	
% positive endorsement General School Satisfaction (Parent/Caregiver/Guardian Opinion Survey)	School	86.0%	
	Similar schools	77.1%	
	State	82.0%	

School Staff Survey

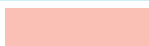
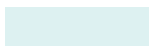
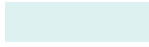
The percentage endorsement by staff on School Climate, as reported in the annual School Staff Survey. Percentage endorsement indicates the percent of positive responses (agree or strongly agree) from staff who responded to the survey.

		2025	
% positive endorsement School Climate (School Staff Survey)	School	77.3%	
	Similar schools	79.0%	
	State	77.4%	

LEARNING

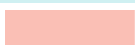
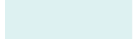
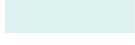
Teacher Judgement of student achievement against the Victorian Curriculum

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

2025			
English Prep - 6 % of students at or above age expected standards	School	95.1%	
	Similar schools	94.8%	
	State	86.3%	
Mathematics Prep - 6 % of students at or above age expected standards	School	92.0%	
	Similar schools	94.5%	
	State	84.2%	

NAPLAN

Percentage of students in the Strong or Exceeding proficiency levels in NAPLAN.

2025				3-year average
Reading Year 3 % of students Strong or Exceeding proficiency levels	School	84.4%		86.7%
	Similar schools	86.0%		85.2%
	State	69.5%		69.3%
Reading Year 5 % of students Strong or Exceeding proficiency levels	School	87.9%		87.8%
	Similar schools	90.1%		90.4%
	State	73.9%		74.6%
Numeracy Year 3 % of students Strong or Exceeding proficiency levels	School	81.2%		78.5%
	Similar schools	83.6%		83.7%
	State	66.2%		66.4%
Numeracy Year 5 % of students Strong or Exceeding proficiency levels	School	80.0%		81.4%
	Similar schools	85.3%		84.4%
	State	69.1%		68.1%

NAPLAN relative growth

The percentage of students in the High and Medium relative growth categories.

Relative growth is determined by comparing a student's current year result relative 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). If the current year result is in the top 25 percent, their gain level is categorised as 'High'; middle 50 percent is 'Medium'; bottom 25 percent is 'Low'.

A multi-year average for NAPLAN relative growth will be included in future years as data becomes available.

2025			
Reading Year 3 to 5 % of students High or Medium relative growth	School	70.3%	
	Similar schools	79.2%	
	State	74.7%	
Numeracy Year 3 to 5 % of students High or Medium relative growth	School	61.9%	
	Similar schools	76.1%	
	State	74.0%	

WELLBEING

Student Attitudes to School – Sense of Connectedness

The percentage 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).

		2025		4-year average
Years 4 to 6 % positive endorsement	School	79.1%		78.6%
	Similar schools	75.2%		75.7%
	State	77.1%		77.3%

Student Attitudes to School – Managing Bullying

The percentage 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).

		2025		4-year average
Years 4 to 6 % positive endorsement	School	82.9%		81.4%
	Similar schools	75.3%		74.7%
	State	76.4%		75.8%

ENGAGEMENT

Average absence days per student

Absence from school can impact on students' learning. Common reasons for non-attendance include illness and extended family holidays.

		2025	4-year average
Prep - 6	School	16.3	17.2
	Similar schools	18.0	18.6
	State	21.5	21.7

Attendance rate

Attendance rate refers to the average proportion of formal school days students in each year level attended.

		2025	
Prep	School	92.4%	
Year 1	School	91.9%	
Year 2	School	92.5%	
Year 3	School	92.3%	
Year 4	School	93.5%	
Year 5	School	90.6%	
Year 6	School	89.3%	

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE AND POSITION

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE - OPERATING STATEMENT SUMMARY FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 DECEMBER 2025

Financial figures are as of 18 March 2026.

Revenue	Actual
Student Resource Package	\$4,266,730
Government Provided DET Grants	\$484,128
Government Grants Commonwealth	\$2,550
Government Grants State	\$0
Revenue Other	\$89,990
Locally Raised Funds	\$619,605
Capital Grants	\$0
Total Operating Revenue	\$5,463,004

Equity	Actual
Equity (Social Disadvantage)	\$8,515
Equity (Catch Up)	\$0
Equity (Social Disadvantage - Extraordinary Growth)	\$0
Equity Total	\$8,515

The equity funding reported above is a subset of the overall revenue reported by the school.

Expenditure	Actual
Student Resource Package ¹	\$4,219,195
Adjustments	\$0
Books & Publications	\$2,827
Camps/Excursions/Activities	\$188,181
Communication Costs	\$656
Consumables	\$61,031
Miscellaneous Expenses ²	\$49,570
Agency Staff	\$182,194
Professional Development	\$14,351
Equipment/Maintenance/Hire	\$66,995
Property Services	\$217,980
Salaries & Allowances ³	\$151,242
Support Services	\$51,402

Expenditure	Actual
Trading & Fundraising	\$23,813
Motor Vehicle Expenses	\$36
Travel & Subsistence	\$0
Utilities	\$57,128
Total Operating Expenditure	\$5,286,601
Net Operating Surplus/-Deficit	\$176,403
Asset Acquisitions	\$179,636

¹ Student Resource Package Expenditure figures are subject to change during the reconciliation process.

² Miscellaneous Expenses include bank charges, administration expenses, insurance and taxation charges.

³ Salaries and Allowances refers to school-level payroll.

FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2025

Funds Available	Actual
High Yield Investment Account	\$361,243
Official Account	\$27,481
Other Accounts	\$84,767
Total Funds Available	\$473,491

Financial Commitments	Actual
Operating Reserve	\$177,901
Other Recurrent Expenditure	\$3,508
Provision Accounts	\$0
Funds Received in Advance	\$0
School Based Programs	\$58,805
Beneficiary/Memorial Accounts	\$0
Cooperative Bank Account	\$0
Funds for Committees/Shared Arrangements	\$13,774
Repayable to the Department	\$0
Asset/Equipment Replacement < 12 months	\$67,981
Capital - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months	\$0
Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months	\$115,508
Asset/Equipment Replacement > 12 months	\$0
Capital - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months	\$0
Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months	\$0
Total Financial Commitments	\$437,477

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.