

2015 Annual Report to the School Community

Yarrabah School

School Number: 5142



Name of School Principal:

Matthew Harris

Name of School Council President:

Keith Smyth

Date of Endorsement:

21/03/2016

All Victorian government school teachers meet the registration requirements of the Victorian Institute of Teaching (www.vit.vic.edu.au).

This 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 Act 2006, inclusive of those schools granted an exemption by the VRQA under the 'Student enrolment numbers' and/or 'Curriculum framework for schools - languages program' minimum standards until 31 December 2015.

About Our School

School Context

Yarrabah is a school of excellence within special education locally and Internationally. Yarrabah is a specialist school that requires approved entry for students from the early years to their final year of schooling. All students whom attend Yarrabah school aged program have mild, moderate or severe intellectual and developmental disabilities. Some Early Education children have not been formally assessed. All school aged students are in receipt of the Program for Students with Disabilities (PSD).

Yarrabah is the school of choice for many families. This is evident by the large percentage of families who choose to send their children from outside the transport zone. Our innovative, practical programs are evidence based and promote enriched communication skills, independence, personal wellbeing and self-esteem in a community atmosphere.

The school is organised into 6 sections from K-12. Subsection 1 is known as the 'Early Education Program'. This section includes student participation in 'Tiny Tots' (Playgroup 0 – 2.8yrs) and Early Education (2.5 – 5 years). Subsection 2 is known as the 'Lower Junior' (5 - 7yrs). Subsection 3 is known as the 'Upper Junior' school (7 – 10yrs). Subsection 4 is known as 'Middles' (10 – 12yrs). Subsection 5 is known as 'Inters'. (13 and 15yrs) or the equivalent of years 7 – 9. Subsection 6 is known as 'Seniors' (15 – 18yrs) or year 10 – 12.

Our school population is diverse and comes from within and outside our designated transport area (DTA).

Our families come from a wide range of backgrounds and cultures. Parents hold high expectations of Yarrabah School and our capacity to support student learning, wellbeing and independence. Intellectual disability does not discriminate and the school currently has an SFO of 4.6 The parents are strong contributors to school council and fundraising with a highly active Parent Fundraising Committee, Parent 2 Parent group and social media presence on Facebook.

There is a strong connectedness between staff and families, which is supported through the employment of a Chaplain. The school provides significant parent support ranging from counseling, assistance with respite care, Centrelink, case management applications and education programs. The school Assistant Principals provide direct support to families through the Positive Parenting Program, Early Education Transition program, a dedicated Playgroup for children from 0 – 2.5 and support for all families experiencing difficulties with truancy, transport, domestic violence, mental illness, integration opportunities and general wellbeing. A 'LinkIt' homework program also operates to connect school and home learning.

Parents actively participate in school events that include 'Come See' programs, School Council, fund raising and resource development (this sense of community extends to our affiliations with other local education settings and community organisations).

Our staff, consist of teachers, education support staff (ESS) including therapists (Speech Pathologists, Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists), specialist (PE, Art, Music, Outdoor Education, Life Skills, library, ICT) and School Chaplain. All staff are highly trained and committed to achieving the best outcomes for each student. Educational Support Staff are highly valued and the school recognises this commitment by paying each ESS their lunch break. The ESS are respected as equals by their teacher colleagues. Professional learning, cooperative planning, peer observations and professional discussions ensure the outcomes for students are paramount, utilising researched best practice and latest technologies. Our staff retention is very stable. Staff want to stay at this school. Staff are loyal and committed in supporting a nurturing, educational environment that maximizes each student's independence.

Leadership foster a culture of support, wellbeing and transparency with each other and families. The leadership team is made up of 4 Teachers, the business manager and three Principal Class.

Our facilities and buildings have expanded significantly over the past 4 years. During this period new buildings have been added. A senior outdoor undercover pavilion, new middle school playground equipment, new play equipment on the senior playground and upgraded ramps, fencing and paths were developed in 2015. All facilities are well maintained and contribute to the friendly, attractive environment. A new maintenance man was employed at the end of 2015. Future site planning aims to provide indoor/outdoor developmental learning environments that reinforce social skills, tolerance, care and support.

The Life Skills Centre, the Art House, library and sensory gardens, hydrotherapy centre, Hands On Learning workshop, purpose built Sensory Room, outdoor learning courtyards between junior and middle classrooms, and Early Education Centre (including outdoor learning spaces) provide additional resources for students to engage in learning. Most of these facilities have been funded through locally raised funds and grant applications.

Students experience two graduations during their life at Yarrabah School (5 – 18yrs). The first graduation occurs when 'Middle' school students (those that have completed a 6/7 review process) enter 'Inters'. Yarrabah students experience a final graduation ceremony in their 18th year.

Achievement

Staff were involved in conducting pre and post assessments within English and Mathematics. Staff were also supported to explore the Pre foundation levels (A-D) in preparation for delivering the Victorian Curriculum in 2016. Staff shared insights into the testing schedule at Teacher Meetings with the focus on resources to improve English and Mathematics testing. This testing has enabled staff to more accurately assess student's achievement.

97% of students achieved their goals in English with 82% of students achieving outcomes above or well above expected progress. 95% of students achieved their goals in Mathematics with 87% of students achieving above or well above expected progress.

96% of students were at the expected or higher than expected level in Interpersonal Development.

Yarrabah continues to be recognized as a leader in implementing the 'Learn to Play' program. In 2015 a teacher in the Primary Section received Teacher of the year for her tireless efforts in developing, evaluating and supporting this implementation. Students continue to develop and refine their abilities to understand the nature of play sessions, develop empathy towards others, reflecting on feelings, developed behavior expectations, object substitution, deccentration and role play skills. The play-based program has enabled students to interact in more positive ways with students and adults at school.

96% of students were at the expected or higher in Personal Learning. Therapists delivered the 'Social Safety' programs, 'Life Skills' program. The engaging programs delivered have contributed to high student achievement.

Yarrabah School encourages leadership within the student body. School captains were selected and the exploration of a 'Student Voice' group was trialed in 2015. Student leaders ran school assemblies, prepared and delivered canteen orders, presented awards, and represent the school during major functions.

97% of students achieved at or above expected achievement level in Science. The introduction of the 'Garden to Kitchen' program has renewed student's enthusiasm around science to actively explore how things grow, mini beasts and life cycles. This program was introduced in only one section of the school with the aim to broaden it and make it more accessible to the whole school in 2016. Theme based programs supported the achievement of students in this area.

Ability based streaming was maintained in the Inters and Seniors program within English, Mathematics, Community Access, Travel Training and Social Safety. This grouping arrangement has lead the school to further explore 'Cluster-based' groups for 2016.

The school worked in partnership with Monash University to provide 6 days of professional development, observational opportunities, presentations and sharing best practice with education officials from Thailand. The school is widely regarded as an outstanding example of individualising opportunities and differentiating learning for students with disabilities. This partnership is likely to continue.

Over 2015 the school developed a 'Teaching and Learning Portal' for the purpose of uploading and organizing pedagogical content, resources and support materials. The portal enabled staff to access schedules, announcements and information from off campus. Further expansion of this portal will continue into 2016.

Engagement

In 2015 the review and evaluation of existing Social Skills Programs was undertaken, the development of Yarrabah's first competency based program within senior school was developed, a review of Managed Individual Pathways (MIPs) occurred, PLC's drafted aims for each section and the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Committee was established.

Yarrabah continues to develop working partnerships with community organisations, agencies and local schools for the purpose of strengthening learning programs and opportunities for students to engage. In 2015 these programs included:

- 'Workskills' program in collaboration with 'Hands on Learning', to provide students a work related experience on campus. This program engaged students to use their hands to build and make projects. It also provided students opportunities to contribute to developing the wider school community.
- Community Access in 2015 provided students varied opportunities to access community spaces and reinforce and / or practice social and life skills. It also provided students opportunities to demonstrate understandings in different contexts.
- Work Experience provided students opportunities to work off campus and gain greater insight into their future options, choices or suitability in future placements. Working closely with Beyond the School Gate, Yarrabah students participated in a work experience program at MSAC for the first time.
- Community placements offered students a chance to work alongside other students from different schools including Mentone Grammar, Mordialloc College, Cornish College and St Louis PS
- Buddy programs allowed student's opportunities to model appropriate skills
- RDA program provided students opportunities to develop skills on horses.
- Sailability was made available to Yarrabah Students in partnership with Mordialloc Sailing Club
- Student Voice allowed students from across the school to participate in the decision making process
- Students ran and operated the canteen

Wellbeing

In 2015 Yarrabah maintained its productive working partnership with Beyond the School Gate. As a result of networking with schools in the region many senior students participated in youth nights with students from other schools. Yarrabah also held three of its own youth nights on campus in the Arts Building.

Yarrabah's SWPB framework was fully implemented across the school. The SWPBS committee worked on developing a system for rewarding students, evaluated the existing student support documentation and reviewing tiers of intervention

Teacher collaboration has been frequently undertaken across PLC's and within staff meetings to ensure that the SWPBS is consistently adopted. Strategies have included:

- Reinforcement of common language across the school
- Social stories
- Refined behaviour support plans and risk assessments
- Team Teach training for 95% of staff
- Staff accessing and undertaking the online module of 'Managing Challenging Behaviours'.

KidsMatter implementation occurred in 2015. A committee of staff, parent and community members was formed. The 1st component of 'Building a Positive School Community' resulted in a number of key goals being achieved. These were:

- Holding a Cultural Awareness day
- Revising the format and presentation of the school Newsletter and introduction of digital Communication systems
- Provide localized PD opportunities for the entire staff over 4 sessions on building positive schools
- Digging deeply into staff understandings of 'Mental Health' and its relationship to students everyday experiences- in the classroom/ wider school
- 'Come See' days

Calm areas within rooms remain across the school. These spaces are used to support the therapy listening program and brushing program assisting students to self-regulate, calm and support concentration.

In 2015 Yarrabah School improved a number of playground activity zones throughout the school including an undercover learning area with bike storage for inter and senior students.

Productivity

Additional technological equipment was purchased as a result of identified need within Domain and increase in student population.

With the support of fundraising the school has purchased another school bus to enable greater student access within the community and ensure that camping programs do not disrupt student outings.

The budget ran a moderate surplus for 2015 and with a moderate projected surplus for 2016 expected.

Workforce planning considerations focussed on the evenness of staffing levels and expertise to meet the needs of all students in the school. Adjustments were made throughout the year due to staff illness, long service and student enrolment numbers. Staff numbers increased from 87 to 95 during the year. It is expected that this will continue to increase while enrolments also increase. Staff made ongoing was equal in percentage to those from previous years, based on student numbers and enrolment predictions.

Modular classrooms continue to pose challenges regarding the positioning, layout and space separating students and staff from key learning areas and multipurpose areas. Significant growth in student numbers, has resulted in a portable 'built environment' of which has been identified by the school council, school community and wider community as inadequate. The main infrastructure concern in 2015 was: the lack of connectedness between many classrooms; classrooms lead out to outdoor areas that require modification, less than optimum layout of teaching and learning spaces due to portable configuration; and the overloading on components of the infrastructure, such as plumbing (roof leaks and sewerage problems) and power concerns.

All proposed actions identified in the AIP were adequately resourced during the 2015 year and sufficient measures in place to resource predicted needs of new SSP into 2016.

Performance Summary

The Government School Performance Summary 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 will help to deliver community engagement in student learning in the school, which is a state-wide priority of the Framework for Improving Student Outcomes.

Key: Range of results for the middle 60 % of Victorian government special schools: Result for this school: Median of all Victorian government special schools:

School Profile

Enrolment Profile

A total of 155 students were enrolled at this school in 2015, 45 female and 110 male. There were 5% of EAL (English as an Additional Language) students and < 10% ATSI (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) students.

Overall Socio-Economic Profile

Based on the school's Student Family Occupation index which takes into account parents' occupations.



Parent Satisfaction Summary

Average level of parent satisfaction with the school, as derived from the annual *Parent Opinion* survey. The score is reported on a scale of 1 to 7, where 7 is the highest possible score.



School Staff Survey

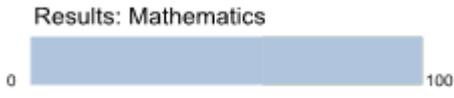
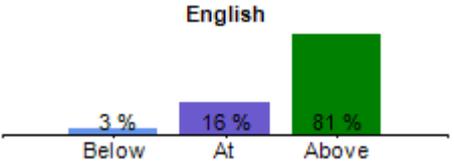
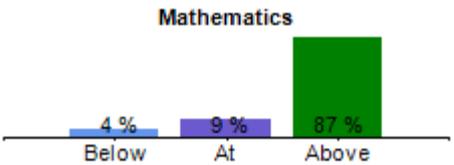
Measures the percent endorsement by staff on school climate derived from the annual *School Staff survey*. The percent endorsement indicates the percent of positive responses (agree or strongly agree) on school climate from staff at the school.

Data are suppressed for schools with fewer than three respondents to the survey for confidentiality reasons.



Performance Summary

Key: Result for this school: ●

Achievement	Student Outcomes	School Comparison
<p>Teacher Assessments from the Australian Curriculum/Victorian Essential Learning Standards (AusVELS)</p> <p>Percentage of students in Years Prep to 12 with a grade of C or above in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> English Mathematics <p>The grades are the same as those used in your child's end of year report.</p> <p>A 'C' rating means that a student is at the standard expected at the time of reporting.</p>	<p>Results: English</p>  <p>Results: Mathematics</p> 	<p>Due to the unique student intake characteristics of this school, School Comparison measures are not appropriate.</p>
<p>Towards Foundation Level AusVELS</p> <p>Learning gain of students, relative to expectation in a year, for all students working within Towards Foundation Level AusVELS (AusVELS A to D).</p> <p>Data will not be displayed where less than 10 student assessments were provided.</p>	<p>English</p>  <p>Mathematics</p> 	<p>Towards Foundation Level AusVELS is not used for the School Comparison.</p>

How to read the Performance Summary

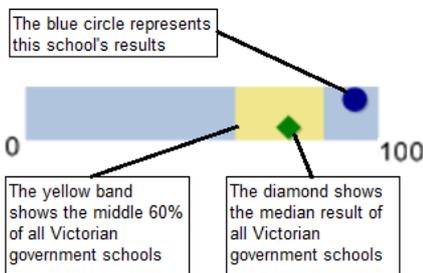
What are student outcomes?

Student outcomes show the achievements of students in this school in English and Mathematics. They also show results in national literacy and numeracy tests and, for secondary colleges, the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) examinations. They provide important information about student attendance and engagement at school.

For secondary colleges, the Performance Summary also provides information about how many students at this school go on to further studies or full-time work after leaving school.

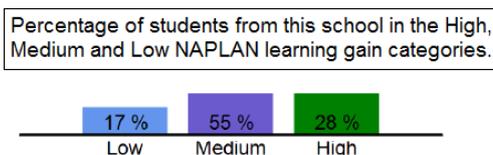
You can see these results for the latest year, as well as the average of the last four years (where available).

The Performance Summary also allows you to compare student outcomes for students at this school with the outcomes of students in all other Victorian government schools.

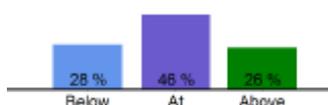


Additionally, NAPLAN learning gain charts are provided for each of the NAPLAN domains. These compare a student's current year NAPLAN result to the results of all 'similar' Victorian students (i.e. students in all sectors in the same year level who had the same NAPLAN score two years prior).

If the current year result is in the top 25% their gain level is categorised as 'High', the middle 50% is categorised as 'Medium' and the bottom 25% is categorised as 'Low'.



Results for students working within Towards Foundation Level AusVELS (AusVELS A-D) show the percentages of these students making progress below, at and above the expectations of their schools.



What is a School Comparison?

The *School comparison* is a way of comparing school performance that takes into account the different student intake characteristics of each school.

A *School comparison* takes into account the school's academic intake, the socio-economic background of students, the number of Aboriginal students, the number of non-English speaking and refugee students, the number of students with a disability, and the size and location of the school.

The *School comparison* measures show that most schools are doing well and are achieving results that are 'similar' to what we would estimate given the background characteristics of their students. Some schools are doing exceptionally well with the students they have, and have 'higher' performance. Some schools have 'lower' performance after taking into account their students' characteristics – these schools will receive targeted support to ensure that there is improvement.

Looking at both the student outcomes and school comparisons provides important information about what a school is doing well and the areas that require further improvement.

More information on school comparison performance measures can be found at:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/management/pages/performreports.aspx>

What is the meaning of 'Data not available'?

For some schools, there are too few students to provide data. For other schools, there are no students at some levels, so school comparisons are not possible. Newly opened schools have only the latest year of data and no averages from previous years. The Department also recognises the unique circumstances of Specialist, Select Entry, English Language and Community Schools where school comparisons are not appropriate.

What is this school doing to improve?

All schools have a plan to improve outcomes for their students. The 'About Our School' statement provides a summary of this school's improvement plan.

Financial Performance and Position

Financial Performance - Operating Statement Summary for the year ending 31 December, 2015

Financial Position as at 31 December, 2015

Revenue	Actual
Student Resource Package	\$6,156,154
Government Provided DE&T Grants	\$734,091
Government Grants Commonwealth	\$20,000
Government Grants State	\$19,725
Revenue Other	\$23,922
Locally Raised Funds	\$163,880
Total Operating Revenue	\$7,117,772

Funds Available	Actual
High Yield Investment Account	\$53,113
Official Account	\$8,107
Other Accounts	\$71,283
Total Funds Available	\$132,502

Expenditure	
Student Resource Package	\$6,161,984
Books & Publications	\$4,781
Communication Costs	\$7,216
Consumables	\$78,600
Miscellaneous Expense	\$185,896
Professional Development	\$15,068
Property and Equipment Services	\$371,030
Salaries & Allowances	\$157,410
Trading & Fundraising	\$15,070
Travel & Subsistence	\$12,679
Utilities	\$32,041
Total Operating Expenditure	\$7,041,775

Financial Commitments	
Operating Reserve	\$20,000
Asset/Equipment Replacement < 12 months	\$53,000
Capital - Buildings/Grounds incl SMS<12 months	\$25,000
Revenue Received in Advance	\$12,264
School Based Programs	\$22,238
Total Financial Commitments	\$132,502

Net Operating Surplus/-Deficit **\$75,997**

Asset Acquisitions **\$70,789**

Student Resource Package Expenditure figures are as of 04 March 2016 and are subject to change during the reconciliation process.

Misc Expenses may include bank charges, health and personal development, administration charges, camp/excursion costs and taxation charges.

Salaries and Allowances refers to school-level payroll.

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.

Financial performance and position commentary

The school is well placed to maintain existing workforce commitments and support increased student enrolments. The school runs a tight financial budget that considers unexpected funding loss.