

2024 Annual Report to the School Community

School Name: Cowes Primary School (1282)



- 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 18 March 2025 at 09:09 AM by Rodney Mckenzie (Principal)

- As executive officer of the school council, I attest that this 2024 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 18 March 2025 at 09:10 AM by Rodney Mckenzie (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
- 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

Learning

- English and Mathematics for Teacher Judgements against the curriculum
- English and Mathematics for National Literacy and Numeracy tests (NAPLAN).

Wellbeing

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

- Sense of Connectedness
- Management of Bullying

Engagement

- Student attendance at school

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:

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 2024 Annual Report

Reporting on the following measures has been updated in the 2024 Annual Report to align with changes to departmental and public reporting products.

NAPLAN

In 2023 NAPLAN was updated to report against proficiency standards. For further information on the changes to NAPLAN reporting in 2023, please refer to the National Assessment Program ['Results and Reports'](#) page.

In line with these changes, the NAPLAN section of the Performance Summary includes NAPLAN data from 2022 to 2024. 2022 NAPLAN data is presented separately as this is not comparable with 2023 and 2024.

The NAPLAN section has been updated to include a 2-year average (2023 and 2024) for the percentage of students in the Strong or Exceeding proficiency levels. The 2022 NAPLAN section continues to report on the percentage of students in the top three bands.

Please note the previously reported NAPLAN 4-year average will not be available until 2026, when there will be 4 years' worth of NAPLAN data available under the new methodology. Similarly, NAPLAN Learning Gain data will not be reported until 2025 as the measure requires at least 3 full years of data for the comparison.

About Our School

School context

Cowes Primary School (CPS) is dedicated to providing high-quality education, care, and safety for all students, ensuring they develop into active, engaged, and responsible citizens within both the local and global community.

In August 2024, we had 517 students enrolled.

150th Anniversary Celebrations

2024 marked a significant milestone as Cowes Primary School celebrated its 150th year. This occasion was commemorated with a range of events that brought the school and community together. A highlight was the return of the school fete, which had not been held since 2020. Other celebrations included a school disco, a recycled clothes market, and a student dress-up day, where students experienced a traditional school setting similar to what may have been offered 150 years ago.

School Setting and Facilities

Our unique setting includes the Phillip Island Early Learning Centre (PIELC), which offers 3-year-old kinder, 4-year-old kinder, and long day care. The PIELC plays an integral role in our ability to provide a seamless educational experience from birth to 12 years, supporting strong learning foundations. The centre is licensed to accommodate 178 students, making it the largest Early Learning Centre in Gippsland.

CPS offers students well-maintained buildings and outdoor spaces, including a competition-sized gymnasium, purpose-built music, art, and STEM rooms, along with quiet sitting areas, grassed play areas, and separate play equipment for junior and senior students. The school also prioritises student wellbeing with a designated wellbeing classroom and a dedicated wellbeing teacher to assist students and their families.

Workforce and Strategic Planning

In 2024, **nine new or returning teachers** joined our dedicated team. Additionally, CPS undertook a school review to develop a new strategic plan, ensuring that we continue to refine our teaching and assessment practices to enhance student outcomes.

Our workforce includes:

- Three principal class officers, Four administration staff, 23 classroom teachers, Learning Specialist, Wellbeing teacher, Learning Tutors, five specialist teachers, 22 Educational Support staff and a Speech pathologist

The Student Family Occupation Education (SFOE) index was 0.3628 2024.

Commitment to Excellence & Evidence-Based Practices

Cowes Primary School is committed to providing an education of real value, enabling all students to reach their academic, social, and physical potential. Our teaching and assessment practices are underpinned by the science of learning research, leading to adjustments that have had a measurable positive impact on student outcomes.

School Values

Cowes Primary School's values guide our students in becoming respectful, safe, resilient learners:

- **Be Respectful** – We respect ourselves, our school, and each other, understanding that our attitudes and behaviors impact the environment and those around us.
- **Be Safe** – We work to create a learning community where all students feel safe and are safe.
- **Be Resilient** – We strive to be resilient by managing emotions, recognizing strengths, being resourceful, reaching out to others, and employing problem-solving skills.
- **Be a Learner** – We maximize our learning by maintaining a growth mindset, embracing new knowledge, and taking responsibility for our effort.

Cowes Primary School continues to foster a learning environment that is inclusive, engaging, and forward-thinking, ensuring all students are equipped with the skills and knowledge to thrive in an ever-changing world.

Progress towards strategic goals, student outcomes and student engagement

Learning

Improving student achievement remains the central focus of daily teaching and learning at Cowes Primary School.

Our 2024 student achievement data continues to reflect strong results. Teacher judgments in English and Mathematics remained higher than both 'similar schools' and State averages. Our 2024 NAPLAN results show that the proportion of students performing in the 'Strong' or 'Exceeding' proficiency bands in Reading and Numeracy at both Year 3 and Year 5 is higher than similar schools and the State average. This sustained performance highlights the school's continued success in working towards our School Strategic Plan (SSP) goals, particularly in literacy and numeracy growth.

Key drivers of improvement in 2024 included:

- Professional learning with leading education experts such as Di Siemon, Emina McLean, Nathaniel Swain, and Bronwyn Ryrie Jones. This professional development has played a pivotal role in deepening staff understanding of evidence-based instructional practices, directly contributing to improved student learning outcomes.
- The Tutor Learning Initiative, which provided students with targeted intervention and additional support.
- Resourcing of additional targeted time within the timetable for literacy and numeracy support, overseen by the School Improvement Team to maximise student learning.
- The continued adoption of evidence-informed practices, including a shift away from balanced literacy approaches towards the science of learning and structured literacy models, leading to improved student outcomes.

Equity and Inclusion:

All students supported by the Program for Students with Disabilities (PSD), Disability Inclusion Profiles, and Koori students demonstrated progress against the individual goals set within their education plans.

Looking ahead, 2025 will also focus on:

- Strengthening the Professional Learning Team (PLT) approach, ensuring teachers use student achievement data to drive instructional planning.
- Target coaching on our Instructional Playbook.
- A major focus on building the capacity of our new staff members, equipping them with the knowledge and understanding required to align with our evidence-informed teaching practices.

These initiatives will ensure continued growth in student learning outcomes, reinforcing Cowes Primary School's commitment to academic excellence.

Wellbeing

Ensuring that students are happy, healthy, and resilient remains a top priority at Cowes Primary School. The 2024 Attitudes to School Survey results (Years 4, 5, & 6) indicate that CPS continues to maintain an environment where students feel positively engaged in areas such as inclusion, stimulating learning, resilience, classroom behavior, and motivation.

Two highlights from the 2024 Attitudes to School Survey results include:

- 89% (previously 91% in 2023) of our students felt connected to school, compared to similar schools (79%) and the State average (77%).
- 94% (previously 96% in 2023) of students responded positively to the school's approach to managing bullying, compared to similar schools (80%) and the State average (75%).

At Cowes Primary School, we set high expectations for success, and it is encouraging that 97% of students positively agree with this statement, in comparison to similar schools and the State (93 & 94%). Research highlights the impact of high expectations on student motivation and performance, reinforcing our commitment to fostering a positive and ambitious learning culture.

Cowes Primary School continues to invest in student wellbeing by employing a full-time wellbeing teacher who supports students across the school and provides an additional resource for staff. Our 2024 achievements highlight continued progress in achieving our School Strategic Plan (SSP) goal of enhancing engagement in learning. The data also reinforces that CPS effectively mobilises available resources to support student wellbeing and mental health, particularly for our most vulnerable students,

Engagement

Absence data highlights that students missed an average of 24.5 days in 2024 in comparison to 20.5 days in 2022. The average number of students with 20 or more days absence (48%) is

higher than previous years and higher than similar schools (40%). The school resourced a designated wellbeing team in 2024 to identify and support students with high absenteeism. This is particularly important given 25% of students missed 30+ days of school (16% in 2023). The team was able to regularly review data to identify reasons for absence and put in place strategies to support those who were absent without a plausible reason.

Other highlights from the school year

Highlights for 2024 included:

- 150 Years of Cowes Primary School
- School Review
- Strong academic & wellbeing outcomes
- School Fete & 150 Years Dress-up Day
- School Disco
- Tennis court refurbishment
- Professional learning aligned with the latest research and best practice
- Nathaniel Swain PD
- Breakfast Club
- Employing a wellbeing teacher who supports students across the school, delivers targeted Tier 2 interventions and also provides a resource for staff
- Prep Buddy Program

Financial performance

Cowes Primary School ended 2024 in a sound financial position. A large portion of the funds available relate to the operation of the Phillip Island Early Learning Centre (ELC). PIELC Kindergarten fees for 2024 were paid by the State government.

Staffing shortages and the need to engage replacements using incentives increased overall staff costs for the year.

Cowes Primary School received \$49,144.53 for the Tutor learning Initiative (TLI) and \$216,824.10 in equity funding. A portion of the equity funding received was used to cover staff delivering the TLI and our wellbeing teacher.

The School Disco generated a profit of \$5,231 and Fete \$15,179. These funds have been directed to the purchasing of resources and new senior playground that will be built in 2025.

The school was successful in obtaining several Sporting Schools Grants to support physical

activity and skill acquisition.

Moving into 2025, funds will be allocated to support the school’s strategic direction and maximise the educational experiences and outcomes of students.

For more detailed information regarding our school please visit our website at <https://www.cowesps.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 523 students were enrolled at this school in 2024, 268 female and 255 male.

4 percent of students had English as an additional language and 2 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).

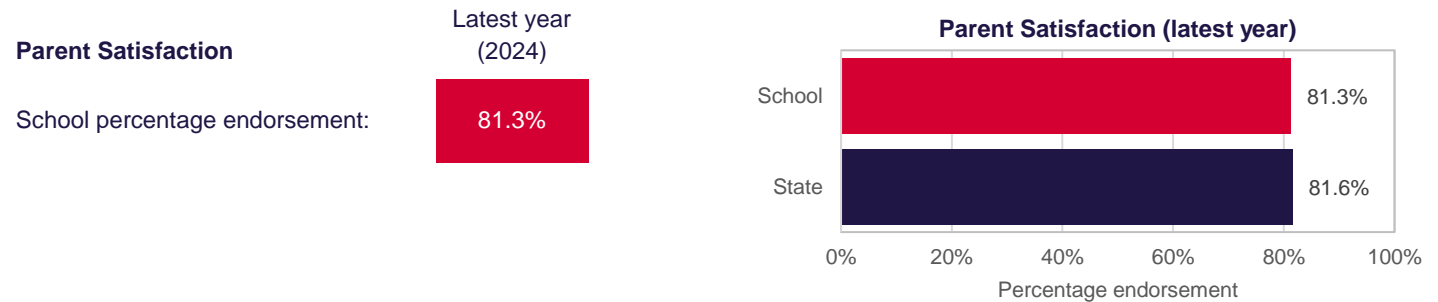
SFOE is a measure of socio-educational disadvantage of a school, based on educational and employment characteristics of the parents/carers of students enrolled at the school. Possible SFOE band values are: Low, Low-Medium, Medium and High. A ‘Low’ band represents a low level of socio-educational disadvantage,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

This school’s SFOE band value is: **Low - Medium**

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.



State average (primary schools):	81.6%
----------------------------------	-------

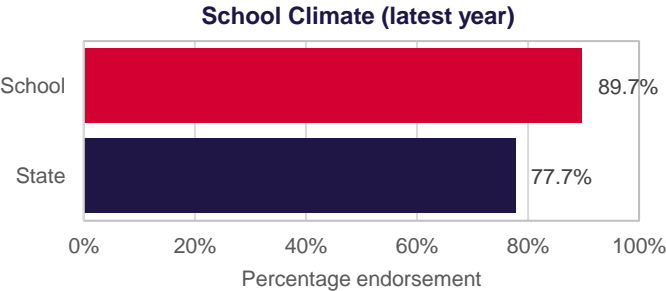
School Staff Survey

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.

School Climate	Latest year (2024)
School percentage endorsement:	89.7%
State average (primary schools):	77.7%



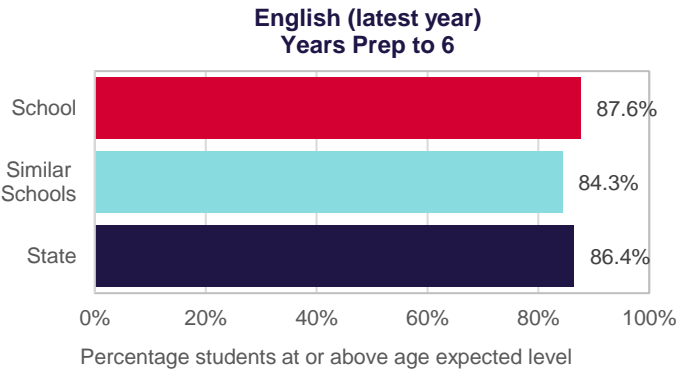
LEARNING

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.

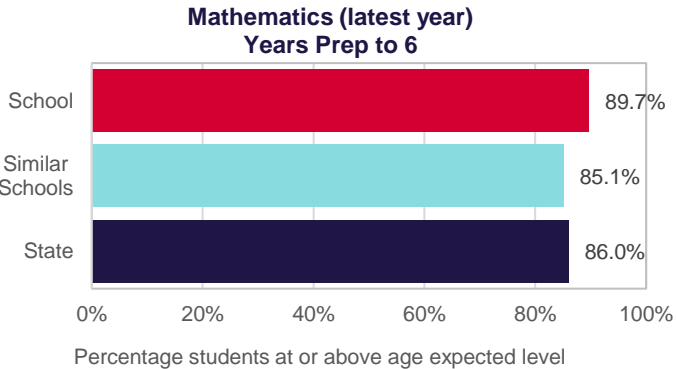
Teacher Judgement of student achievement against the Victorian Curriculum

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

English Years Prep to 6	Latest year (2024)
School percentage of students at or above age expected standards:	87.6%
Similar Schools average:	84.3%
State average:	86.4%



Mathematics Years Prep to 6	Latest year (2024)
School percentage of students at or above age expected standards:	89.7%
Similar Schools average:	85.1%
State average:	86.0%



LEARNING (continued)

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.

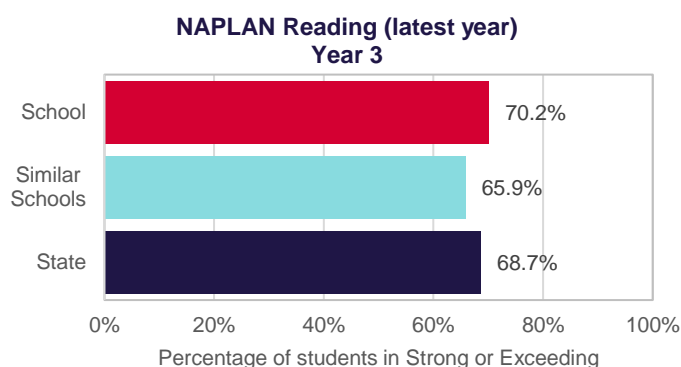
NAPLAN

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

Note: The NAPLAN test was revised in 2023. As a result, a 2-year average has been provided for 2024.

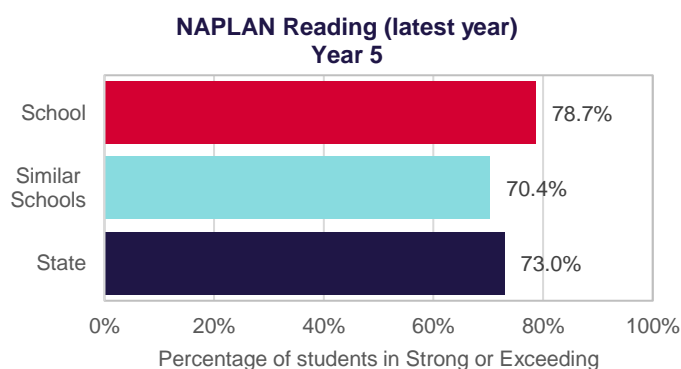
Reading Year 3

	Latest year (2024)	2-year average
School percentage of students in Strong or Exceeding:	70.2%	72.7%
Similar Schools average:	65.9%	65.8%
State average:	68.7%	69.2%



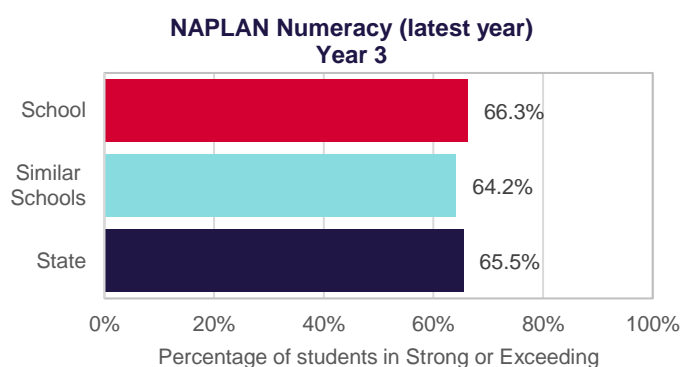
Reading Year 5

	Latest year (2024)	2-year average
School percentage of students in Strong or Exceeding:	78.7%	84.4%
Similar Schools average:	70.4%	73.3%
State average:	73.0%	75.0%



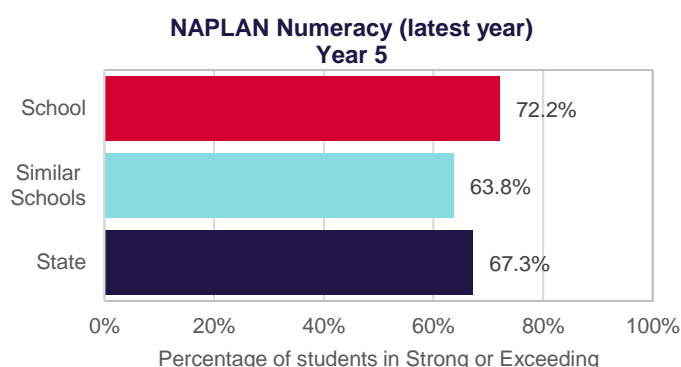
Numeracy Year 3

	Latest year (2024)	2-year average
School percentage of students in Strong or Exceeding:	66.3%	68.1%
Similar Schools average:	64.2%	64.4%
State average:	65.5%	66.4%



Numeracy Year 5

	Latest year (2024)	2-year average
School percentage of students in Strong or Exceeding:	72.2%	74.1%
Similar Schools average:	63.8%	64.1%
State average:	67.3%	67.6%



LEARNING (continued)

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.

NAPLAN 2022

Percentage of students in the top three bands of testing in NAPLAN.

Reading Year 3

(2022)

School percentage of students in the top three bands:

86.6%

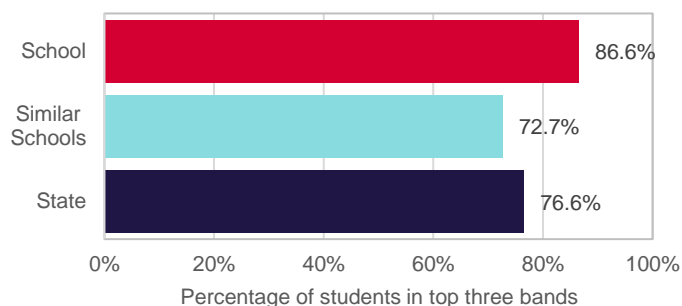
Similar Schools average:

72.7%

State average:

76.6%

NAPLAN Reading (2022) Year 3



Reading Year 5

(2022)

School percentage of students in the top three bands:

77.9%

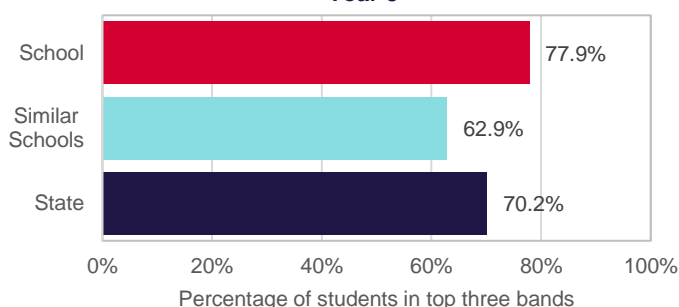
Similar Schools average:

62.9%

State average:

70.2%

NAPLAN Reading (2022) Year 5



Numeracy Year 3

(2022)

School percentage of students in the top three bands:

72.7%

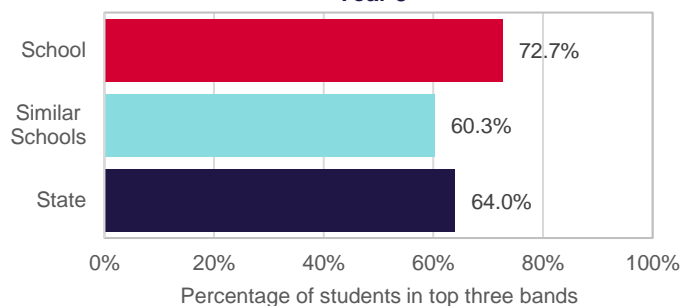
Similar Schools average:

60.3%

State average:

64.0%

NAPLAN Numeracy (2022) Year 3



Numeracy Year 5

(2022)

School percentage of students in the top three bands:

61.8%

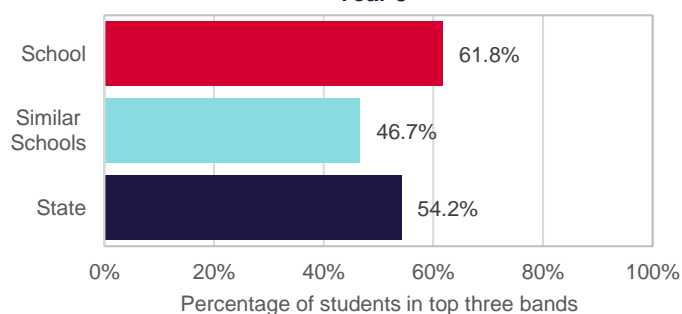
Similar Schools average:

46.7%

State average:

54.2%

NAPLAN Numeracy (2022) Year 5



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.

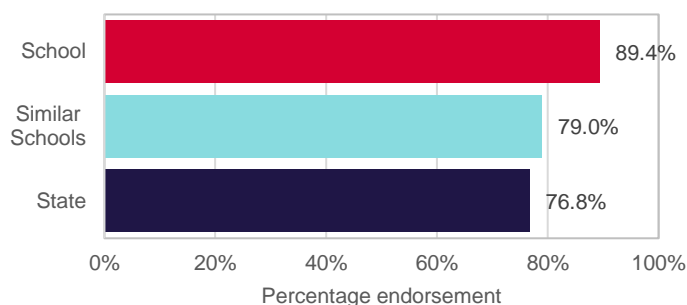
Student Attitudes to School – Sense of Connectedness

The 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).

Sense of Connectedness Years 4 to 6

	Latest year (2024)	4-year average
School percentage endorsement:	89.4%	92.2%
Similar Schools average:	79.0%	78.8%
State average:	76.8%	77.9%

Sense of Connectedness (latest year) Years 4 to 6



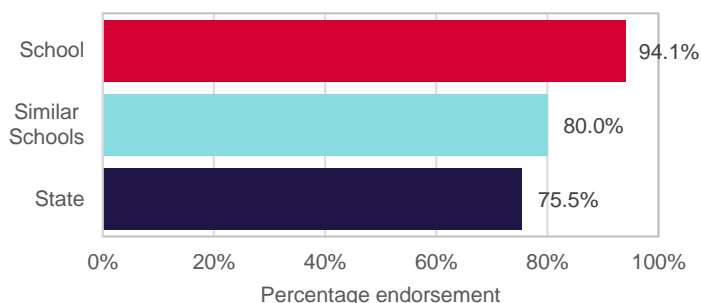
Student Attitudes to School – Management of Bullying

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).

Management of Bullying Years 4 to 6

	Latest year (2024)	4-year average
School percentage endorsement:	94.1%	96.2%
Similar Schools average:	80.0%	79.5%
State average:	75.5%	76.3%

Management of Bullying (latest year) Years 4 to 6

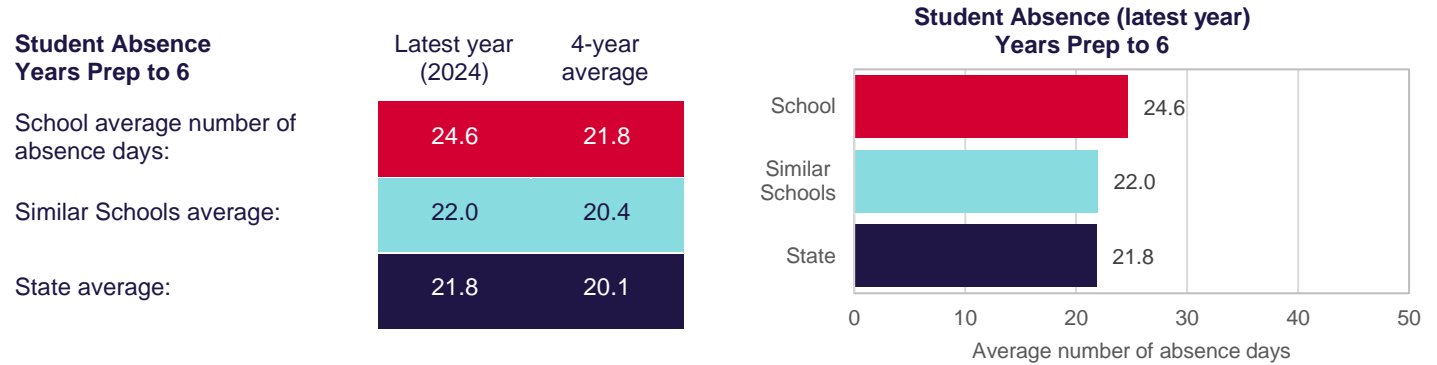


ENGAGEMENT

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.



Attendance Rate (latest year)

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

	Prep	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Attendance Rate by year level (2024):	89%	89%	89%	87%	87%	86%	86%



Financial Performance and Position

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE - OPERATING STATEMENT SUMMARY FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 DECEMBER, 2024

Revenue	Actual
Student Resource Package	\$5,686,998
Government Provided DET Grants	\$832,521
Government Grants Commonwealth	\$823,747
Government Grants State	\$1,197,837
Revenue Other	\$206,124
Locally Raised Funds	\$805,756
Capital Grants	\$180,000
Total Operating Revenue	\$9,732,983

Equity ¹	Actual
Equity (Social Disadvantage)	\$216,824
Equity (Catch Up)	\$0
Equity (Social Disadvantage – Extraordinary Growth)	\$0
Equity Total	\$216,824

Expenditure	Actual
Student Resource Package ²	\$5,671,962
Adjustments	(\$62,956)
Books & Publications	\$30,670
Camps/Excursions/Activities	\$139,957
Communication Costs	\$3,998
Consumables	\$214,023
Miscellaneous Expense ³	\$106,428
Professional Development	\$57,057
Equipment/Maintenance/Hire	\$166,367
Property Services	\$330,737
Salaries & Allowances ⁴	\$2,426,410
Support Services	\$119,132
Trading & Fundraising	\$151,941
Motor Vehicle Expenses	\$0
Travel & Subsistence	\$3,243
Utilities	\$82,313
Total Operating Expenditure	\$9,441,282
Net Operating Surplus/-Deficit	\$291,701
Asset Acquisitions	\$34,458

- (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 03 Mar 2025 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 2024

Funds available	Actual
High Yield Investment Account	\$2,581,020
Official Account	\$566,637
Other Accounts	\$10,894
Total Funds Available	\$3,158,551

Financial Commitments	Actual
Operating Reserve	\$638,972
Other Recurrent Expenditure	\$0
Provision Accounts	\$139,381
Funds Received in Advance	\$0
School Based Programs	\$740,500
Beneficiary/Memorial Accounts	\$0
Cooperative Bank Account	\$0
Funds for Committees/Shared Arrangements	\$0
Repayable to the Department	\$0
Asset/Equipment Replacement < 12 months	\$0
Capital - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months	\$300,000
Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months	\$70,000
Asset/Equipment Replacement > 12 months	\$0
Capital - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months	\$0
Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months	\$0
Total Financial Commitments	\$1,888,853

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.