

2022 Annual Report to the School Community

School Name: Merriang Special Developmental School (5284)



- 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 of the previous calendar year 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 14 March 2023 at 09:47 AM by Ebony Mitchell (Principal)

- This 2022 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 17 March 2023 at 10:23 AM by Molly TANKEY (School Council President)

How to read the Annual Report

What does the 'About Our School' commentary section of this report refer to?

The 'About our school' commentary provides a brief background on the school and an overview of the school's performance over the previous calendar year.

The 'School Context' describes the school's vision, values, and purpose. Details include the school's geographic location, size and structure, social characteristics, enrolment characteristics, and special programs.

The 'Progress towards strategic goals, student outcomes, and student engagement' section allows schools to reflect on highlights related to implementation of and progress towards the School Strategic Plan and Annual Implementation Plan, and efforts to improve student learning, wellbeing, and engagement.

What does the 'Performance Summary' section of this report refer to?

The Performance Summary includes the following:

School Profile

- student enrolment information
- the school's 'Student Family Occupation and Education' category
- a summary of parent responses in the Parent Opinion Survey, shown against the statewide average for Specialist schools
- school staff responses in the area of School Climate in the School Staff Survey, shown against the statewide average for Specialist schools

Learning

- English and Mathematics for Teacher Judgements against the curriculum

Engagement

Student attendance and engagement at school, including:

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

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

Considering COVID-19 when interpreting the Performance Summary

The Victorian community's experience of COVID-19 had a significant impact on normal school operations over the past three years. This impacted the conduct of assessments and surveys. Readers should be aware of this when interpreting the Performance Summary, particularly when interpreting trend data.

For example, in 2020 and 2021 school-based surveys ran under changed circumstances, and NAPLAN was not conducted in 2020. Further, absence and attendance data during this period may have been affected by the level of COVID-19 in the community and may be influenced by local processes and procedures adopted in response to remote and flexible learning.

Readers should keep this in mind when viewing and interpreting the data presented in the Annual Report.

How to read the Annual Report (continued)

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.

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

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

What is the 'Towards Foundation Level Victorian Curriculum'?

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

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

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

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

About Our School

School context

Merriang Special Developmental School is a dual campus, government specialist school located in the City of Whittlesea. The Later Years Campus and main administration offices are located in Duncan Rd Lalor and is attended by secondary aged students, whilst primary aged students attend the Early Years Campus located in South Morang. There is a distance of 10.1 driving kilometres between the campuses. The school's vision is 'To lead special education through exemplary and innovative practice'. Our school values of Safety, Respect and Active Learning align to the school's expected behaviours of We Are Safe, We Are Respectful and We Are Learners. The school continues to promote a positive learning environment through SWPBS and our behaviour purpose statement reflects this commitment 'Merriang promotes effective, social and purposeful learning by creating a safe and positive school environment. Through predictable and consistent school wide behavioural learning expectations we will empower, engage and support all members of the school community.'

In 2022, the Early Years Campus comprised nine classes whilst the Later Years campus comprised eight classes, both campuses utilising classrooms for art and music specialist programs. The Early Years Campus also had access to shared facilities with The Lakes South Morang College (Primary Campus) and offered an inclusive environment, however due to ongoing DET COVID protocols and staffing impacts this continued to be impacted upon. The Later Years Campus facilities included an outdoor fully covered basketball court, sports area which supported physical education programs in most weather. Due to commencement of construction works mid year, some areas such as food technology and horticulture were no longer able to be utilised. Works continued through in to 2023. Students across both campuses interacted with the local community through an extended curriculum designed to promote independent life skills, however this continued to be impacted due to DET Covid protocols and staffing impacts.

In 2022 the school's enrolment was 110 students, 30 female students and 80 male students. 27% of our students had English as an Additional Language (EAL) an increase from 2021 and NDP percent were Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (ATSI). The overall socio-economic profile of the school is in the high band for our families.

The teaching team consisted of the Principal, two Assistant Principals, one .6 Leading Teacher, one Learning Specialist, 20 teachers (18.4 EFT) and 22 Education Support staff (16.64 EFT). There are also three administration staff across the school (2.8 EFT) and 2 ES therapy staff who are employed 1.0 (2.0 EFT).

Progress towards strategic goals, student outcomes and student engagement

Learning

In 2022 the school's AIP continued to focus on the implementation of Key Improvement Strategies (KIS) related to the FISO dimension of Building Practice Excellence. To support implementation of these, key staff continued DET professional learning communities (PLC's) training over an extended period of time. The focus was on researching and determining early literacy phonics based programs to be implemented within the early years. The Early Years campus rolled out the new resources and continued a wider implementation of the program with great success. All early years students attained success in reaching their English goals by the end of 2022.

The development of the 15+ Senior Pathways Program has seen an increase in student engagement and attendance. The program encompasses skill development, practical application, real life experiences and challenges.

Wellbeing

Merriang SDS continued to implement School Wide Positive Behaviour Support to support student wellbeing, engagement and positive school climate. The SWPBS Leading Teacher / SWPBS Coordinator continued to lead SWPBS initiatives and PBS Teams. Tier 1 teams were schoolwide and implemented universal strategies for all students. The Tier 2 team comprised the SWPBS co-ordinator, allied health staff and a member of the school Leadership and focussed on additional supports for students referred through the referral process in consultation with classroom staff.

In 2022, PBS Teams continued to be committed in ensuring the school have effective practices, interventions and systems to support student learning outcomes.

Student wellbeing continued to be a priority area for the school, particularly in relation to the COVID-19 guidelines and isolation period requirements.

The parent satisfaction survey reflects a NDA for 2022 whilst the school climate survey (staff) was 71.6% above the state average of 61.5% for specialist schools and a slight drop from 2021 (72.8%). This continued to reflect the school priority of students, families and staff wellbeing through 2022.

Engagement

Students who were due to exit in both 2020 and 2021 were successful in obtaining a 'maximum exemption year' for 2022 and this ensured a smoother post school transition. All students were successful in obtaining a preferred post school program. Student absences increased in 2022, from 24.4% in 2021 to 43.3%. Factors influencing the increase included COVID isolation requirements including families heightened concerns for student wellbeing when COVID cases were within the classroom. A number of students also had previously delayed medical procedures or specialists that were re scheduled and required strict pre testing procedures. Students also had decreased immunity due to COVID restrictions and as such were more prone to colds, flus and general illnesses. Families were extremely pro active in ensuring students unwell did not attend school to minimise the impact on all.

Other highlights from the school year

In 2022 Merriang SDS reintroduced school camps for specific year levels. Students attended Blackwood Outdoor Education Centre camp specifically for students within specialist settings. Students enjoyed the opportunity to participate in activities that enabled them to develop new skills and challenged their abilities.

The school introduced an end of year Graduation Dinner at a local function centre to celebrate the achievements of all students finishing their education at Merriang SDS. Attendance from students, families and staff was extremely high and the event set a high standard for future celebrations.

The early years campus celebrated the Queen's Jubilee with the instalment of a treed area at the front of the school. We celebrated the opening of the area with a community event attended by representatives from our local federal MP office, community members, families, staff and students.

Our end of year family fun day was held at our Lalor campus, utilising the newly installed outdoor courts with COLA cover. Students from classes performed items and the day enabled families, students and staff to celebrate the year's achievements as well as enabling all families the opportunity to view the securely fenced new building under construction.

Our 15+ students participated in a Post School Option program that included work experience opportunities, engagement with our local in Men's Shed, supported employment experience, Bunning entrepreneurship program and attended our Post School Options community event.

Financial performance

Merriang SDS's financial position continued to show growth, reflected in the school's Financial Performance and Position Report. The school finished the 2022 school year with a surplus of \$699,387.00 which has been allocated in 2023 to the of purchase two new school Mercedes sprinter buses to support increased student engagement and community links at an approximate cost of

\$250,000.00. The remaining funds will ensure maintenance at both campuses can be completed as well as supporting any additional works resulting from the completion of Stage 1 building at Lalor and refurbishments at South Morang, including upgrades to bathrooms facilities.

Extraordinary expenditure encompassed building works and upgrades across the school. In 2022, the school upgraded the Early Years Campus classrooms, allied health spaces and office areas including reconfiguration of teaching and learning spaces to support increased student engagement and learning as well as an upgrade of flooring and cabinetry at a cost of \$429,092.85. \$49,913.60 was expended on painting across both campuses, whilst \$53,691.00 enabled pinboards to be replaced and increased across the school.

The school received \$25,850.00 from the Swimming in School's program which funded swimming and hydrotherapy programs for students across the school over the year. We were also successful in obtaining two shade sail grant: \$25,00.00 and \$20,000.00, ensuring increased shade at each campus to support outdoor learning. ADVANCE funding of \$9800.00 enabled a post school option expo to be held off site to support families and students in understanding the range of options available post school as well as supporting the 15+ program which builds upon community links. Sporting in Schools Funding of \$1800.00 funded SEDA sports initiative which entailed four sessions for all secondary aged students to further develop their physical skills, health and wellbeing.

For more detailed information regarding our school please visit our website at
<https://www.merriangsds.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 110 students were enrolled at this school in 2022, 30 female and 80 male.

27 percent of students had English as an additional language and NDP percent were Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

Overall Socio-Economic Profile

The overall school's socio-economic profile is based on the school's Student Family Occupation and Education index (SFOE).

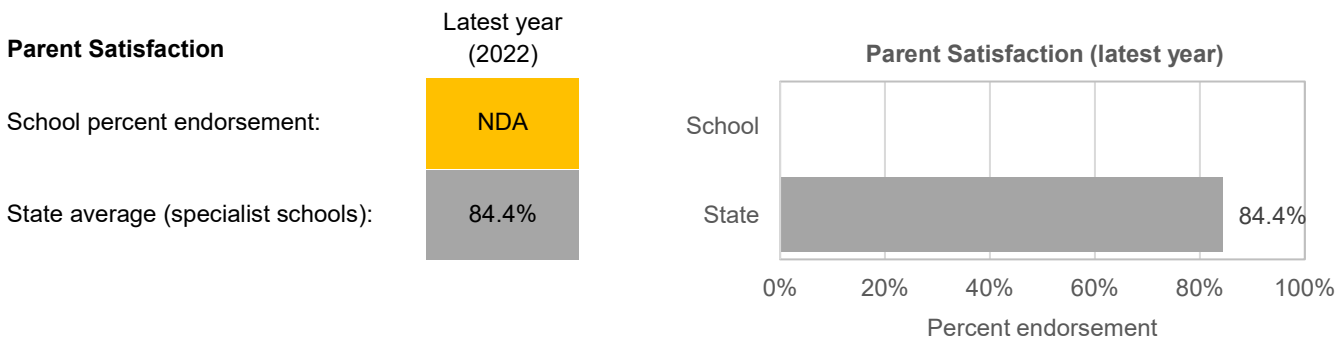
SFOE is a measure of socio-educational disadvantage of a school, based on educational and employment characteristics of the parents/carers of students enrolled at the school. Possible SFOE band values are: Low, Low-Medium, Medium and High. A 'Low' band represents a low level of socio-educational disadvantage,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

This school's SFOE band value is: High

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.

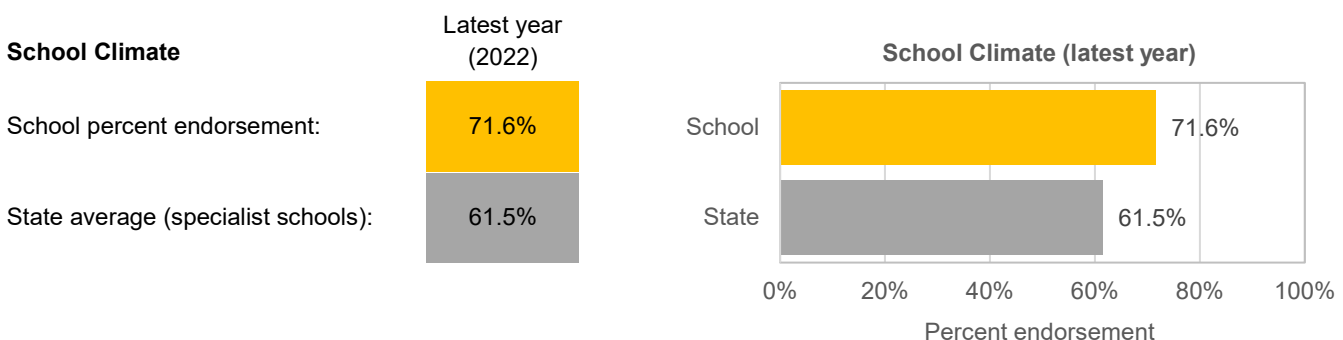


School Staff Survey

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.



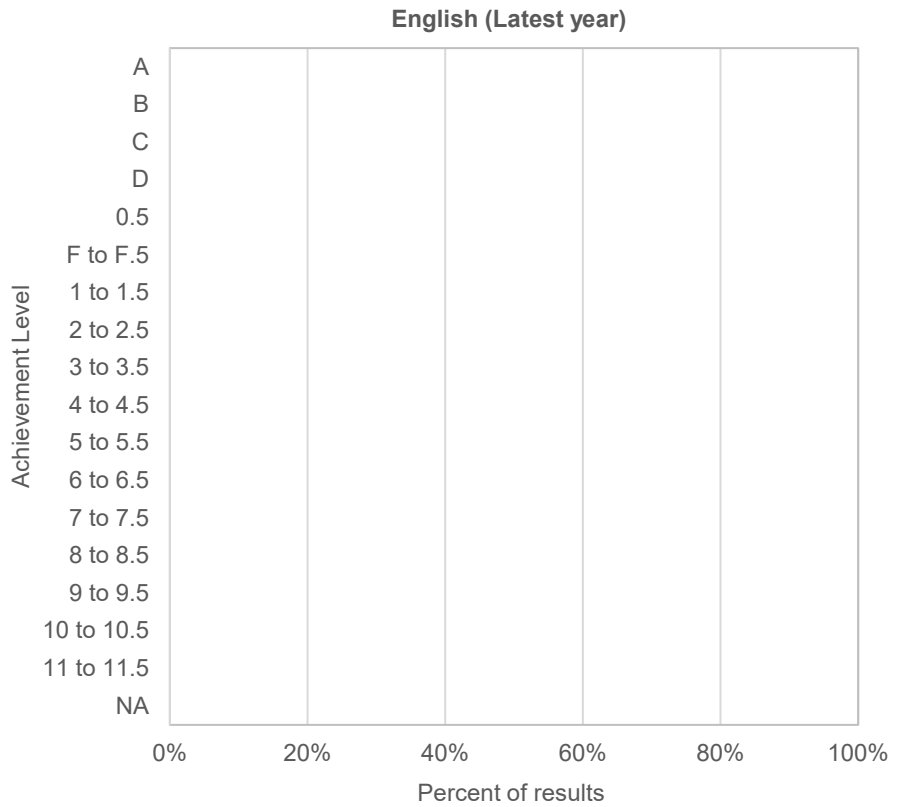
LEARNING

Teacher Judgement of student achievement

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

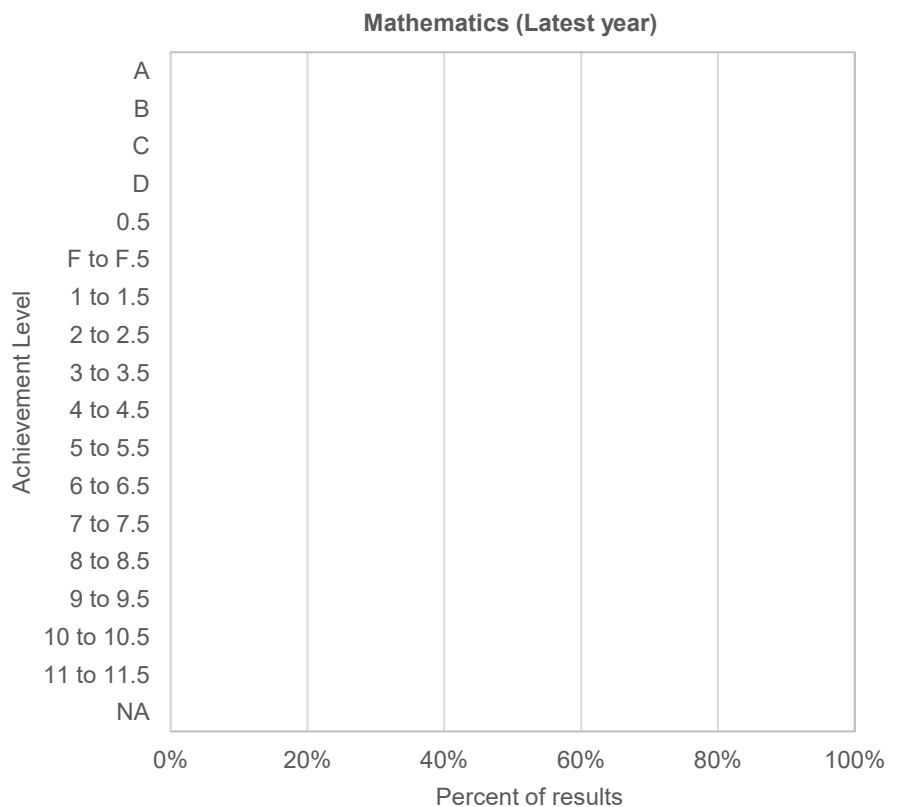
English

Achievement Level	Latest year (2022)
A	NDA
B	NDA
C	NDA
D	NDA
0.5	NDA
F to F.5	NDA
1 to 1.5	NDA
2 to 2.5	NDA
3 to 3.5	NDA
4 to 4.5	NDA
5 to 5.5	NDA
6 to 6.5	NDA
7 to 7.5	NDA
8 to 8.5	NDA
9 to 9.5	NDA
10 to 10.5	NDA
11 to 11.5	NDA
NA	NDA



Mathematics

Achievement Level	Latest year (2022)
A	NDA
B	NDA
C	NDA
D	NDA
0.5	NDA
F to F.5	NDA
1 to 1.5	NDA
2 to 2.5	NDA
3 to 3.5	NDA
4 to 4.5	NDA
5 to 5.5	NDA
6 to 6.5	NDA
7 to 7.5	NDA
8 to 8.5	NDA
9 to 9.5	NDA
10 to 10.5	NDA
11 to 11.5	NDA
NA	NDA



ENGAGEMENT

Average Number of Student Absence Days

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

Student Absence	2019	2020	2021	2022	4-year average
School average number of absence days:	28.8	26.2	24.4	43.3	31.0

Students exiting to further studies or full-time employment

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

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

Student Exits	2018	2019	2020	2021	4-year average
School percent of students with positive destinations:	100.0%	NDP	NDP	100.0%	100.0%

Financial Performance and Position

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE - OPERATING STATEMENT SUMMARY FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 DECEMBER, 2022

Revenue	Actual
Student Resource Package	\$4,585,561
Government Provided DET Grants	\$1,389,267
Government Grants Commonwealth	\$1,800
Government Grants State	\$54,800
Revenue Other	\$28,520
Locally Raised Funds	\$26,701
Capital Grants	\$0
Total Operating Revenue	\$6,086,649

Equity ¹	Actual
Equity (Social Disadvantage)	\$50,917
Equity (Catch Up)	\$0
Transition Funding	\$0
Equity (Social Disadvantage – Extraordinary Growth)	\$0
Equity Total	\$50,917

Expenditure	Actual
Student Resource Package ²	\$4,554,689
Adjustments	\$8,000
Books & Publications	\$0
Camps/Excursions/Activities	\$16,297
Communication Costs	\$3,434
Consumables	\$68,304
Miscellaneous Expense ³	\$12,202
Professional Development	\$14,633
Equipment/Maintenance/Hire	\$138,317
Property Services	\$158,531
Salaries & Allowances ⁴	\$243,869
Support Services	\$0
Trading & Fundraising	\$4,871
Motor Vehicle Expenses	\$4,548
Travel & Subsistence	\$1,048
Utilities	\$45,351
Total Operating Expenditure	\$5,274,093
Net Operating Surplus/-Deficit	\$812,556
Asset Acquisitions	\$634,353

- (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 24 Feb 2023 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 2022

Funds available	Actual
High Yield Investment Account	\$685,032
Official Account	\$14,355
Other Accounts	\$0
Total Funds Available	\$699,388

Financial Commitments	Actual
Operating Reserve	\$97,173
Other Recurrent Expenditure	\$6,710
Provision Accounts	\$0
Funds Received in Advance	\$0
School Based Programs	\$0
Beneficiary/Memorial Accounts	\$0
Cooperative Bank Account	\$0
Funds for Committees/Shared Arrangements	\$0
Repayable to the Department	\$0
Asset/Equipment Replacement < 12 months	\$142,677
Capital - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months	\$0
Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months	\$300,000
Asset/Equipment Replacement > 12 months	\$250,000
Capital - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months	\$0
Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months	\$0
Total Financial Commitments	\$796,560

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.