

2023 Annual Report to the School Community

School Name: Blackburn English Language School (8747)



- 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 06 March 2024 at 01:52 PM by Mairead Hannan (Principal)

- This 2023 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 19 March 2024 at 03:59 PM by Fiona Purcell (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 Language schools
- school staff responses in the area of School Climate in the School Staff Survey, shown against the statewide average for Language schools

Key terms used in the Performance Summary are defined below:

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.

Updates to the 'Performance Summary' in the 2023 Annual Report

Reporting on the following measures has been updated in the 2023 Annual Report to align with changes to departmental and public reporting products.

Parent/Caregiver/Guardian Opinion Survey, School Staff Survey and the Attitudes to School Survey

The calculation of the percentage endorsement for all survey measures has been revised to no longer include skipped responses. This applies to all survey measures reported in the Performance Summary. The change to the calculation reduces the negative impact of skipped responses on school results, particularly where there were a small number of respondents to the survey.

Additionally, the Parent Satisfaction measure has been revised to use the percentage endorsement of the 'General School Satisfaction' factor of the Parent/Caregiver/Guardian Opinion Survey only. Previously, this measure reflected an average of multiple factors in the survey. The change to reporting a single factor is consistent with how Parent Satisfaction is reported to schools and in other public reports.

About Our School

School context

Blackburn English Language School (Blackburn ELS) delivers full-time, intensive English language programs to newly arrived students in metropolitan and rural areas of the North-Eastern Victoria Region. The school provides primary and secondary English language programs to students from a range of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. The school vision is to provide an inclusive, rigorous and engaging learning environment for newly arrived students to develop their English language proficiency and empower them with the knowledge, skills and capabilities to be confident, active participants in the Victorian schooling system and broader community. The school values are Future Making - We strive to learn, grow and to build a positive future, Embracing Diversity - We celebrate and respect difference. Our differences unite and strengthen us, and Building Communities - We work and learn together. We care for and respect each other. The school purpose is to optimise student English language acquisition to best prepare them for the transition to mainstream educational settings. The school operates across three campuses: the Whitehorse Campus in Burwood East, a second campus, Maroondah Campus established in 2009 in Croydon North and a third campus in Wodonga on the grounds of the Wodonga Middle School College-Huon Campus, established in 2018. Students are eligible to enroll for a 6 month or 12-month program based on their visa code within six months of their arrival in Australia.

Student numbers fluctuate in accordance with settlement patterns and Australian Government immigration policies. After the pause in migration due to the COVID-19 pandemic, 2023 was a year of re-establishing campuses in response to new patterns of immigration, with lower numbers of refugee migrants and shifts in settlement patterns due to housing, the cost of living and the availability of community supports for migrants. Whilst in 2021-2 programs were based at the Whitehorse campus and staff were engaged in the ETAC and ECEP programs, 2023 focused on re-opening and resourcing all campuses and supporting each to re-establish community networks and respond to new migrant intakes appropriately. In 2023 enrolments steadily increased at all campuses, with 226 students across the school in term 1 and building over the year to 331 students in Term 4. Accordingly, staffing also increased from 42.4 equivalent full-time staff in 2022 to 62.4 in 2023: 3 Principal class, 5 Leading Teachers, 2 Learning Specialists **35** teachers and **16** Education Support staff.

Progress towards strategic goals, student outcomes and student engagement

Learning

The school Achievement goal is: To optimise the English language learning of newly arrived students in preparation for mainstream school and participation in the broader community. Student progress against the EAL Victorian F-10 Curriculum of two or more stages in all language modes (S&L,R&V,W) was the standard measurement of expected progress. In 2023 the school identified that students newly arrived in Australia had highly varied experiences – many experienced extended periods of disruption to their learning in their home countries including long periods of online/remote learning and long periods of isolation. Consequently, teachers identified that students were challenged in a number of ways, including - learning and study habits, organisational skills, building and maintaining relationships with peers, general resilience in the face of the changes they experience and maintaining mental health and interacting positively in the classroom. For staff, 2023 also presented challenges as the school hired many new staff and many returned from temporary placements in mainstream schools. Our focus for the 2023 school year was therefore rebuilding, induction and supporting new staff over time, re-establishing collaborative practices and positive learning environments to optimize learning. Learning specialists focused on supporting new staff with effective classroom practices and the new arrivals curriculum. Effective and meaningful PLCs and formative assessment to assess and monitor learning were a focus that was very well received by staff. Pleasingly, teacher judgement of student achievement data showed expected levels of learning gain and staff reported favorably on collaboration to improve EAL teaching practice achieve these outcomes. The school did not have students on the PSD in 2023 although one student with hearing impairment was supported and a number of students who showed difficulties with learning and/or engagement were supported and monitored through an IEP or BSP and their next schools were provided with specific observations and evidence to support individual learning needs moving forward.

Wellbeing

The school Wellbeing goal is to create a safe, supportive and inclusive school environment for all students. In supporting the settlement of newly-arrived families, the school recognizes key transition points for students - on enrollment at Blackburn ELS, movement from class to class during their time at the school and in moving onto mainstream schooling at the end of their program. The school role to induct students into our program, build their understanding of the school values and behavioural expectations

were a strong focus. In 2022-23 as a result of interruptions to student schooling prior to arrival in Australia, students displayed greater challenges in establishing and sustaining friendships, resolving conflicts, turn taking and sharing and demonstrating respect both in face to face interactions and in online communications. During 2023 the school benefited from prior foci on: placing the school values as a central component of classroom expectations; Respectful Relationships curriculum which aids students in understanding cultural and legal norms in Australian institutions and the broader society; the renewed Health Curriculum to build student understanding and support their transition to mainstream schools; forums with parents to introduce them to the Victorian education system, enunciate our school values and expected behaviours, providing parents with clarity and strategies to support their children's learning in partnership with the school. The school deepened its work in this area in 2023 as it experienced more challenging wellbeing and classroom behaviours than in previous years. In Term 4, the school developed a positive behaviours framework with staff and increased resourcing for those with additional needs. In the context of an intensive program, learning, ability and behavioural needs were identified swiftly and support plans were developed and monitored closely so as to provide support for students both at the school and as they moved to the next setting.

Engagement

Student engagement is critical for positive learning outcomes particularly for students new to Australian schooling and new to English language instruction. Continuous references to the values the school holds and promulgates assists students to be collaborative, collegiate, diligent learners focused on positive outcomes for themselves and their classmates. A positive behaviours framework layered over the values, enables students to acquire behaviours that support their development as learners and as young people, and create a positive learning climate for all students. Student attendance rates very highly in comparison to state averages. Lateness can be an issue as students and their families navigate public and private transport challenges as they adapt to a new city. The school is assiduous in following up on lateness and absenteeism and informing parents of the importance of students arriving at school each day ready for learning. The school emphasis in establishing a safe and supportive learning environment whereby trust and respect are built, enables students to take risks with their learning. This is critical as learners need to experiment with language and in the acquisition phase will express unconventional grammatical forms, pronunciation variations and idiosyncratic speech and writing amongst other errors. Errors are seen as growth opportunities. Critical aspects for effective engagement lie with accurate and continuous assessment of student need and student growth. This consistent engagement relies of the delivery of learning at point of need, so learners are challenged and extended as required. Aspirational student goal setting and effective teacher feedback also play an important role here in providing clarity to ensure learning is targeted and responsive. Overall the great majority of students approach their learning of English enthusiastically and see the long-term benefit of maximising this opportunity to build a strong foundation for their future.

Other highlights from the school year

Opening campuses at Maroondah and Wodonga after the pause in migration was a focus for the school. Enrolments increased over the year at all campuses with smaller numbers at two campuses. Staff returned from ETAC and ECEP placement which had been in place during the pause in migration. The school employed new staff and is working to improve their skills in EAL teaching and learning for newly arrived students. The school worked at accommodating changing learning and behaviour needs of cohorts across campuses as each campus re-established. Term 1 saw the completion of renovations to lower primary classrooms at Whitehorse campus. Harmony Day celebrations highlighted our multi-cultural, multilingual school in the context of a diverse Australia. Revival of our swimming program across each campus is providing opportunities for newly arrived learners to gain an understanding of water safety and develop or build upon swimming skills. Excursion program each term in both sectors included our three-day city program for secondary learners in terms 2 and 4. Parent engagement in open classroom and attendance at school information sessions/parenting sessions and parent teacher meetings were strong and feedback was positive.

Financial performance

The school is in a favourable financial position. Some reserve funds are available to complete future works across campuses. School Council sponsored work on upgrading primary classrooms at Whitehorse campus in the main building to mirror the upgrades in the lower primary building that were completed in term 1 2023. These upgrades were the most significant expenditure for the 2023 school year. The school posted a surplus at the end of the 2023 school year which is allocated to further improvements across the school. The surplus was due to a number of factors – in 2022 the school's campuses had been funded so as to be prepared to

respond to the return of migration across the school year, however the campuses remained closed for the duration of the 2022 school year due to low numbers at Maroondah and Wodonga. Due to changes in student needs, in 2023 equity funding was allocated providing higher levels of support in wellbeing and transition and ongoing pedagogical and curriculum development needs in response to changes to student cohorts and needs due to the impacts of the pandemic. The school has allocated wellbeing staff and increased the number of teacher aides supporting learning and inclusion in classrooms using equity funding so as to support each campus equitably.

For more detailed information regarding our school please visit our website at [For more detailed information regarding our school please visit our website at http://www.blackburnels.vic.edu.au](http://www.blackburnels.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 259 students were enrolled at this school in 2023, 109 female and 150 male.

100 percent of students had English as an additional language and 0 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).

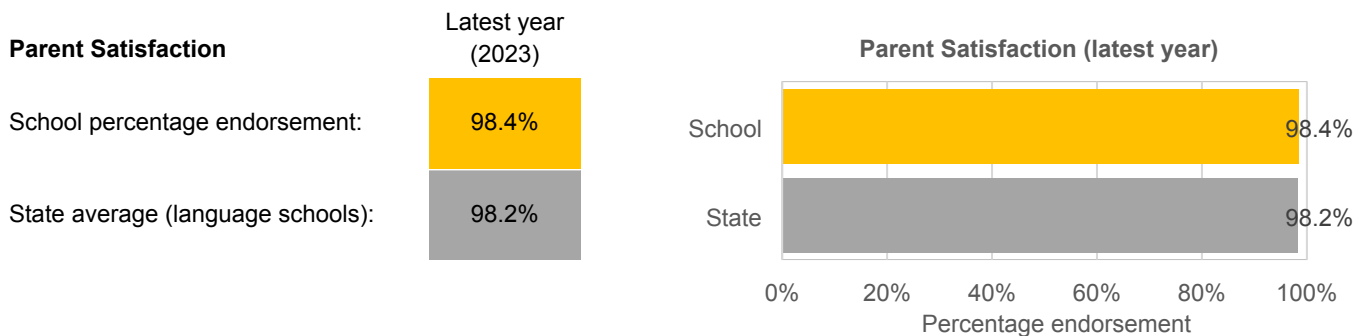
SFOE is a measure of socio-educational disadvantage of a school, based on educational and employment characteristics of the parents/carers of students enrolled at the school. Possible SFOE band values are: Low, Low-Medium, Medium and High. A 'Low' band represents a low level of socio-educational disadvantage,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

This school's SFOE band value is: Medium

Parent Satisfaction Summary

The percentage endorsement by parents on their General School Satisfaction, as reported in the annual Parent/Caregiver/Guardian Opinion Survey.

Percentage endorsement indicates the percent of positive responses (agree or strongly agree) from parents who responded to the survey.

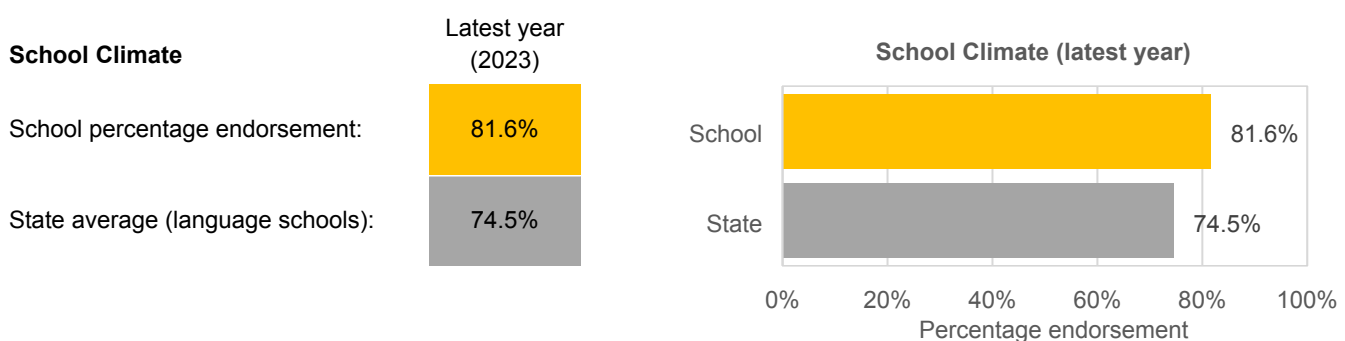


School Staff Survey

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.

Data is suppressed for schools with three or less respondents to the survey for confidentiality reasons.



Financial Performance and Position

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE - OPERATING STATEMENT SUMMARY FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 DECEMBER, 2023

Revenue	Actual
Student Resource Package	\$9,237,642
Government Provided DET Grants	\$1,355,059
Government Grants Commonwealth	\$3,342
Government Grants State	\$0
Revenue Other	\$79,675
Locally Raised Funds	\$203,448
Capital Grants	\$0
Total Operating Revenue	\$10,879,167

Equity ¹	Actual
Equity (Social Disadvantage)	\$382,587
Equity (Catch Up)	\$0
Transition Funding	\$0
Equity (Social Disadvantage – Extraordinary Growth)	\$0
Equity Total	\$382,587

Expenditure	Actual
Student Resource Package ²	\$7,112,892
Adjustments	\$0
Books & Publications	\$17,027
Camps/Excursions/Activities	\$109,168
Communication Costs	\$15,339
Consumables	\$92,519
Miscellaneous Expense ³	\$58,195
Professional Development	\$37,297
Equipment/Maintenance/Hire	\$154,184
Property Services	\$206,523
Salaries & Allowances ⁴	\$281,753
Support Services	\$181,706
Trading & Fundraising	\$3,931
Motor Vehicle Expenses	\$0
Travel & Subsistence	\$14,534
Utilities	\$39,415
Total Operating Expenditure	\$8,324,484
Net Operating Surplus/-Deficit	\$2,554,684
Asset Acquisitions	\$239,416

- (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 16 Feb 2024 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 2023

Funds available	Actual
High Yield Investment Account	\$1,736,870
Official Account	\$10,598
Other Accounts	\$211
Total Funds Available	\$1,747,679

Financial Commitments	Actual
Operating Reserve	\$173,209
Other Recurrent Expenditure	\$995
Provision Accounts	\$0
Funds Received in Advance	\$9,395
School Based Programs	\$2,162
Beneficiary/Memorial Accounts	\$0
Cooperative Bank Account	\$0
Funds for Committees/Shared Arrangements	\$54,167
Repayable to the Department	\$0
Asset/Equipment Replacement < 12 months	\$0
Capital - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months	\$0
Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months	\$0
Asset/Equipment Replacement > 12 months	\$0
Capital - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months	\$1,500,000
Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months	\$0
Total Financial Commitments	\$1,739,928

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.