

2022 Annual Report to the School Community

School Name: Merrijig Primary School (1379)



- 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.

- This 2022 Annual Report to the School Community has been tabled and endorsed at a meeting of the school council on 4/5/23 and will be publicly shared with the school community

About Our School

School context

Merrijig Primary School is a remote rural school with 26 students enrolled. It is situated in a valley bordered by Mt Buller, Mt Stirling, Mt Timbertop and the Delatite River. Our staff is committed to providing and delivering a comprehensive and challenging curriculum that allows all of our students to reach their potential, whilst taking into account individual learning styles and matching activities to their point of need. This includes differentiating lessons to provide for all ability levels whilst ensuring that our students make steady progress along the curriculum continuum. Our guiding focus has been on improving Literacy and Numeracy across the school and we are continue to make progress in both these areas. The provision of a one-to-one laptop scheme has seen a wider integration of technology into daily lessons. Our facilities include an office/staff area and three open plan classrooms. The Merrijig MARC is also housed in the outdoor education centre.

Merrijig Primary School aims to develop caring, confident individuals who have the skills and positive attitudes to reach their personal potential, be lifelong learners and be valued members of the community. The school supports the following Values:

Care and Compassion – care for self and others

Doing Your Best- try hard, pursue excellence and demonstrate resilience

Fair Go- respect others and treat all people fairly

Honesty and Trustworthiness- be honest, sincere and truthful

Motivation- a strong desire to learn and demonstrate motivation

Respect- treat others with consideration and regard respecting their point of view

Responsibility- be accountable for one's own actions, resolve differences in constructive ways and, take care of the environment

Understanding, Tolerance and Inclusion- demonstrate an appreciation of diversity within a multicultural society, respecting individual's beliefs, cultures and differences.

Our School Council is very supportive and our parent community works tirelessly to fundraise and provide additional resources for our students. We have 4.2 staff to deliver our curriculum program, including a teacher to deliver a language other than English (LOTE) and Music program to enrich curriculum provision and provide the students access to both instrumental music and performing arts. Our school is also serviced by a Mobile Library Van (MARC) teacher who, while based at Merrijig, provides library lessons on a fortnightly basis to eight other small schools. Additionally, we offer a range of extra-curricular activities, including alpine skiing on Mt Buller, horse riding, a P-6 camping program (that we share with Jamieson Primary) and community led activities such as craft and co0king. We also collaborate with our partner rural school, Jamieson Primary, to plan, moderate for assessment and share professional learning activities.

Progress towards strategic goals, student outcomes and student engagement

Learning

Although no NAPLAN data was collected in 2021, our four-year average data shows that we are above the similar schools average and also above the state average in reading at both year three and year five. While this is extremely pleasing, having a small cohort of children who sit the test can show drastic result changes from year to year. We attribute our sustained results, in part, to the effectiveness that a whole school spelling program has provided, as well as the reading focus highlighted in our previous strategic plan.

Having made changes to the structure of our literacy block has proved to be successful and we are following the most recent research in how children learn to read and ensuring that the recommendations made are reflected in our teaching practice. Our numeracy result show a dip at Year 5, as do both like schools and state, and we will be maintaining an ongoing improvement cycle in numeracy. Our Year 3 numeracy data is solid against both like schools and state.

Wellbeing

Parent satisfaction, according to the Parent Opinion Survey, indicated extremely pleasing results of 96.8, falling well above the state median of 79.8 and clearly indicating to staff that the school is perceived to be a safe learning environment by the parents. The school attempted to build parent involvement by having increased parental support on camps and excursions, which was extremely successful.

Student well-being has shown signs of improvement and the informal AToSS conducted in 2022 confirmed this. Student well-being remains an on-going focus at Merrijig Primary.

In 2022, the school continued to provide a positive learning environment for all students through weekly check ins with both students and parents. The school utilised the additional DET funding to employ a wellbeing teacher one day per week for Semester 2 and introduced the parents and students to The Resilience Project. This program, alongside Respectful Relationships and our Positive Behaviours expectations has seen growth in all student's wellbeing.

Engagement

Merrijig Primary students are engaged and connected to their school and the school has continued to develop their engagement, motivation and collaboration. The main focus was returning the students to school successfully and ensuring that the transition was a smooth process. We contacted parents with any concerns and got back into routines as quickly as possible to make them feel secure and safe back at school.

In terms of absences, the school ensured that a process was in place to contact parents whose children were absent and worked with them to return the children to school, or remote learning, as soon as possible. The school's absence rate is below both the 2022 State and Like schools. The ongoing school target of reducing absences to 20 days or less was not met but as many of the absences were covid related, we believe that we could not have done any better.

Financial performance

Merrijig Primary School maintained a sound financial position throughout 2022. The 2017-2020 School Strategic Plan, alongside the 2021 Annual Implementation Plan, continued to provide the framework for school council allocation of funds to help support school programs and priorities.

The Financial Performance and Position Report shows an actual end of year surplus of \$76 546. This surplus occurred mainly through the MARC budget and has been committed to MARC Van and Box replacement, as well as MARC equipment purchases. The School received a small amount of Equity Funding in 2022, which contributed to an extra allocation to support the students with additional learning needs. The school also received additional wellbeing funding, which was utilised to hire an additional staff member.

For more detailed information regarding our school please visit our website at

<http://www.merrijigps.vic.edu.au>