

2024 Annual Report to the School Community

School Name: Dandenong Valley Special Developmental School (5238)



- 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 24 April 2025 at 12:10 PM by Rhonda Fletcher (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 24 April 2025 at 12:10 PM by Rhonda Fletcher (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 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).

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.

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

Dandenong Valley Special Developmental School is an F-12 school located in Narre Warren, Victoria. We cater for students with a moderate to profound intellectual disability. Our average enrolment for 2024 was 174 FTE for our school aged cohort and 39 students in our EEP program. The school staff comprises 3 Principal Class staff, 30.2 FTE teachers and 50.13 FTE educational support staff, most of whom are classroom based, the remainder make up our therapy team and administrative staff. Our therapy team in 2024 was three speech therapists (2 part time), two occupational therapists, one physiotherapist and one music therapist. All Victorian Government Teachers meet the requirements for registration with the Victorian Institute of Teaching. Our school meets the requirements for registration with the VQRA.

Our school community is multi-cultural and this is reflected in the ethnic origins of the staff as well as the students. We currently have staff who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. 35% of our students have parents born in Australia. 65% of our student population have parents who were born in other countries; Afghanistan (16%) and India (8%) are the two largest communities with other countries such as Sri Lanka, Samoa, New Zealand, Philippines, Pakistan, Iraq and China represented in the school community as well. Our vision is for Dandenong Valley SDS to achieve excellence in teaching and learning, and provide the best outcomes for each of our students. We uphold the conviction that every student has the ability and the right to learn. Our school values are: Respect, Integrity and Responsibility. It is with that conviction that Dandenong Valley SDS strives to increase each students' level of personal independence in all possible areas from communication to daily living skills, including social and recreational skills throughout their school lives. Every avenue is pursued to prepare students to transition to appropriate adult options post school. Dandenong Valley SDS utilises the Schoolwide Positive Behaviour Framework to enhance well-being and engagement. In addition to providing educational services to school age children we run an Early Education Program which in 2024 catered for 40 families with pre-school age children. Our three year old students attend the program one day a week with four year old students attending for two days a week.

Progress towards strategic goals, student outcomes and student engagement

Learning

The Dandenong Valley SDS Strategic Plan for student learning is to improve student learning outcomes. Specifically, we focus on students' goals in the areas of: ability to communicate, improving their independence and social competency skills. We aim for at least 90% of our students to achieve their Individual Education Plan (IEP) goals in each of these three areas. These IEP goals are set at Student Support Group meetings in conjunction with families, parents, therapists and, in some cases, students themselves. Goals are individually developed using the Victorian Curriculum

where the majority of our students are working at Levels A-D in the curriculum.

Assessment of student progress is monitored through the use of the assessment tools such as data walls which show student learning growth and progress, allowing for teachers to monitor and assess small steps of student learning improvement against their goals. This progress is reported to parents at both mid-year and end of year reporting cycles. Student achievement data shows that the percentage of students who achieved their IEP goals in 2024 were: Communication 80%, Independence 80%, Social Competencies 85%.

As well as a focus on IEP goals students accessed a comprehensive learning program across all areas of the Victorian Curriculum. English and Mathematics are key areas of learning for our students and their classroom-based learning may be supported by community access activities where students are able to practise their English and Maths skills in various contexts. Students' individual achievement against all areas of the Victorian Curriculum is reported to the Department of Education each year.

Wellbeing

School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) is a major factor in student well-being. In 2024 a focus for SWPBS was developing a uniform template for Student Behavior Support Plans and Student Behavior Snapshots to enable consistency in the understanding of and response to student behaviors. Strategies for supporting and reinforcing expected behaviors were also developed. Students were able to 'earn' tokens for positive behavior and use them to purchase items of interest from our SWPBS shop. Staff professional development ensured a consistent implementation of these strategies across the school. The school was successful in achieving the SWPBS Gold Award this year.

In conjunction with SWPBS the school continues to implement targeted and individualised regulation programs designed by teachers and therapists, enabling students to increase their ability to focus more on their learning and develop their social competency skills. This year the school reviewed its Personal Safety Program. A new Social Emotional Learning Program that incorporates both the SWPBS and the Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships programs was written for implementation in 2025.

Student voice and agency has also been a continued focus at the school. The ability of students to use their voice continues to be improved with the increased use of both low and high tech communication tools across the school. These include electronic devices which families are increasingly using with funding through the NDIS and State Schools Relief. The Department of Education tutor learning initiative has enabled the school to employ a part time tutor to work with identified students on their communication skills. Therapy staff have supported families with student wellbeing throughout the year. Assisting families with student communication skills and independence skills such as toileting and self-regulation by classroom and therapy staff has enabled consistency of student support between school and home and an increase in student wellbeing.

Programs such as Bike Education, Health and PE, PMP and hydrotherapy pool sessions assisted our students to engage with a healthy, active lifestyle. The school again received funding through the Active Schools Program to support student participation in sporting activities. Students participated in Interschool sporting activities such as basketball, gymnastics, T-ball and soccer.

Sports excursions such as golf, tennis, gymnastics and basketball enabled more students to experience a range of different sporting activities.

Engagement

Our school participated in the Department of Education (DE) Student Attitudes to School Survey, which provided positive feedback on our school environment and programs.

We have a strong student leadership program, with representatives at all levels, including two leaders each from the junior, middle, and senior schools, eight house leaders, and two school captains selected from our Transition year levels. This year, both school captains were in their final year of schooling.

As a Schoolwide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) school, we uphold four core values: Be Responsible, Be Respectful, Be a Learner, and Be Safe. These expectations are explicitly taught in classrooms and reinforced in various school environments, including the classroom, school bus, playground, hydrotherapy pool, and community. Many of our students can articulate these values and demonstrate their understanding of safe, responsible, and respectful behaviour.

Our school fosters a positive and inclusive environment, strengthened through Student Support Group (SSG) meetings, where students, parents, and staff collaborate to support learning and wellbeing. This year, we saw an increase in parent participation in these meetings. Additionally, parents and caregivers engaged with the school community through events such as Footy Day, Olympics Day, the Book Week Parade, assemblies, and Graduation.

A highlight of the year was our Music Through the Pages-themed School Concert in September, where many parents and caregivers attended to watch students showcase their talents.

In 2024, students participated in a range of community-based learning and wellbeing programs, including community access, camps, excursions, interschool sports, and bike rides in the local area. The school also hosted incursions focused on farm animals and reptiles, as well as a dance program through 'Footsteps', which ran for middle and senior students throughout Term 2.

Our Acknowledgement of Country was enriched through a student-led video, created with staff support, featuring our Acknowledgement of Country song accompanied by AUSLAN signs. This video is played at every assembly, allowing all students to actively participate by signing and singing along.

To strengthen communication between teachers and families, we promoted the use of Seesaw, a parent communication app. Teachers increasingly used this platform to share photos and videos of students engaging in learning activities. As a result, some parents actively used the app to track their child's progress and celebrate their achievements.

In 2024 student absence remained at a high level with 50% of students having 20 or more days absence for the year. Given the complex medical needs of many of our students the main reason for student absence continues to be medical and/or illness related.

Other highlights from the school year

In 2024 construction of our new school buildings (Stage 1) was completed. Eight new modern classrooms have been built for our senior school students with modern toilet facilities and additional regulation spaces, The grounds include a new bike track, purpose built playgrounds and a horticulture area. Therapy spaces including offices and a purpose built physiotherapy room have also be finished in a separate building with additional consultation and meeting rooms for use by staff across the school. During the construction phase the school was successful in achieving additional funding to construct two specialist classrooms, including a purpose built art room and these have also been completed. Students and staff moved into their new rooms at the end of 2024 and are enjoying learning in their new spaces. Upgrades to school infrastructure such as electrical, fire services, sewerage and storm water have also be included as part of these building works.

Financial performance

The school has concluded 2024 in a favourable financial position with a significant surplus. Surplus funds are committed to building and grounds improvements following the completion of the classroom building upgrade and to future staffing requirements.

Our school reserves substantial funds to maintain its buildings and grounds allowing for a safe, functional, and visually appealing environment and most importantly, for the safety and well-being of our students and staff.

A new, fully equipped bus including a wheelchair hoist was also purchased in 2024 ensuring all students have the opportunity to participate in community access activities and allowing them access to a range of contexts to practice skills towards achieving their individual goals.

The school received additional funds beyond the SRP in the following areas to support our senior transitioning students and to supplement the VSBA classroom building upgrade.

· Kefford Trust funds	\$1365
· Advance Grant	\$9,800
· Furniture & Equipment – Building upgrade grant	\$236,835

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

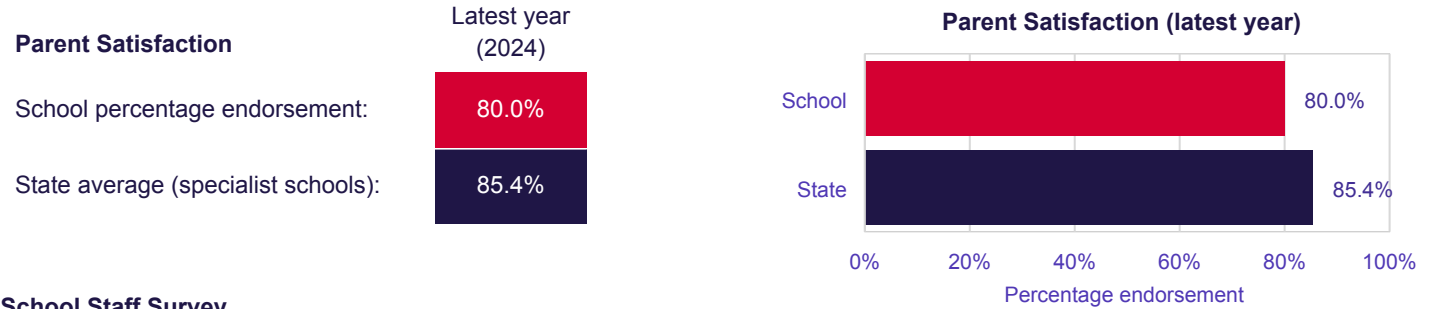
A total of 186 students were enrolled at this school in 2024, 46 female and 140 male.
41 percent of students had English as an additional language and NDP percent were Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

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: **Medium**

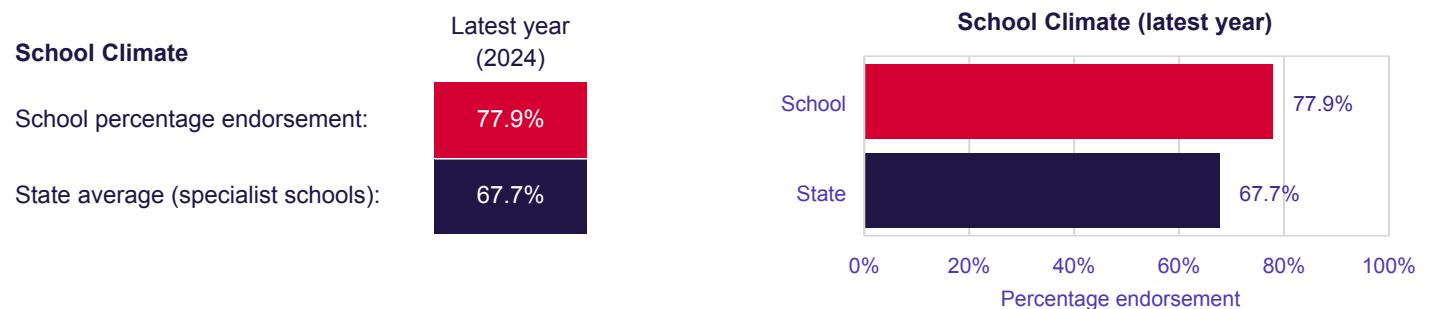
Parent Satisfaction Summary

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.

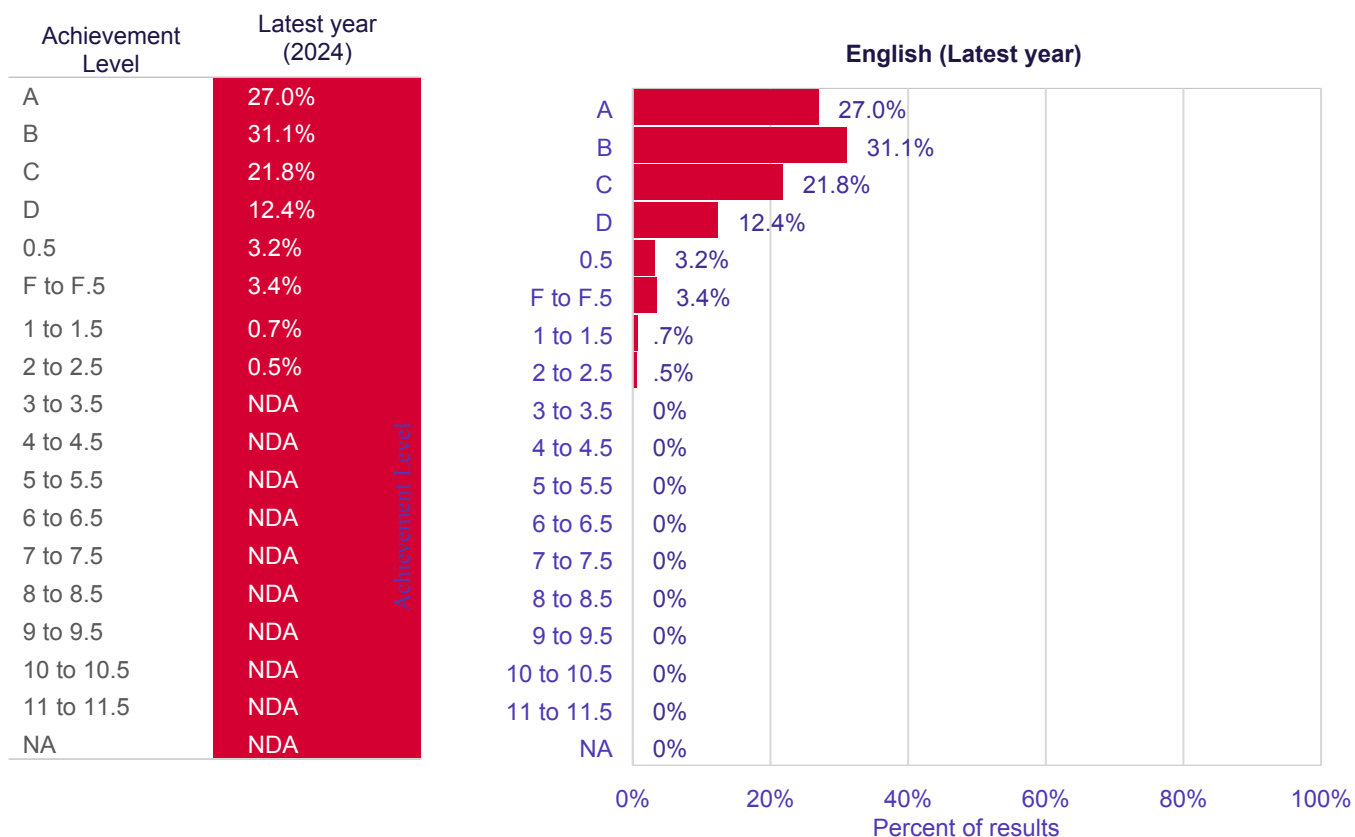


LEARNING

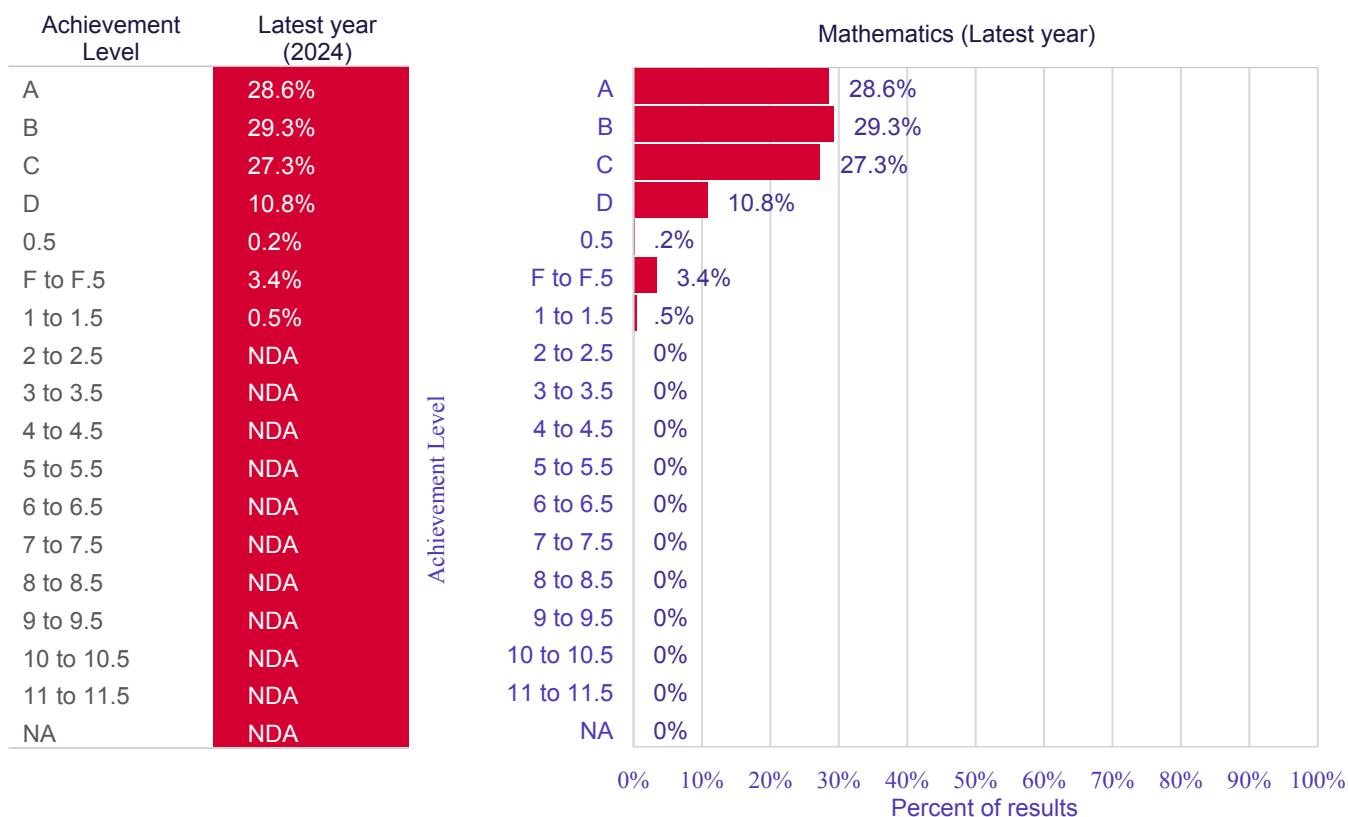
Teacher Judgement of student achievement

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

English



Mathematics



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	2021	2022	2023	2024	4-year average
School average number of absence days:	20.8	17.9	27.3	29.1	23.8

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	2021	2022	2023	2024	4-year average
School percent of students with positive destinations:	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Financial Performance and Position

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

Revenue	Actual
Student Resource Package	\$11,026,732
Government Provided DET Grants	\$1,850,024
Government Grants Commonwealth	\$0
Government Grants State	\$246,635
Revenue Other	\$56,735
Locally Raised Funds	\$33,966
Capital Grants	\$0
Total Operating Revenue	\$13,214,091

Equity ¹	Actual
Equity (Social Disadvantage)	\$63,720
Equity (Catch Up)	\$0
Equity (Social Disadvantage – Extraordinary Growth)	\$0
Equity Total	\$63,720

Expenditure	Actual
Student Resource Package ²	\$9,812,253
Adjustments	\$0
Books & Publications	\$0
Camps/Excursions/Activities	\$24,329
Communication Costs	\$16,091
Consumables	\$124,211
Miscellaneous Expense ³	\$46,909
Professional Development	\$31,998
Equipment/Maintenance/Hire	\$169,319
Property Services	\$462,632
Salaries & Allowances ⁴	\$1,979
Support Services	\$792,137
Trading & Fundraising	\$3,164
Motor Vehicle Expenses	\$12,697
Travel & Subsistence	\$57
Utilities	\$101,581
Total Operating Expenditure	\$11,599,356
Net Operating Surplus/-Deficit	\$1,614,736
Asset Acquisitions	\$234,302

- (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 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	\$1,368,370
Official Account	\$87,602
Other Accounts	\$0
Total Funds Available	\$1,455,972

Financial Commitments	Actual
Operating Reserve	\$298,162
Other Recurrent Expenditure	\$0
Provision Accounts	\$0
Funds Received in Advance	\$104,849
School Based Programs	\$109,744
Beneficiary/Memorial Accounts	\$0
Cooperative Bank Account	\$0
Funds for Committees/Shared Arrangements	\$0
Repayable to the Department	\$0
Asset/Equipment Replacement < 12 months	\$194,186
Capital - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months	\$749,030
Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months	\$0
Asset/Equipment Replacement > 12 months	\$0
Capital - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months	\$0
Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months	\$0
Total Financial Commitments	\$1,455,972

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.