

School Review Report 2018



North Western Victoria 2711

Fairfield Primary School

Strategic Plan 2015 – 18

School Principal	Name: Paul Wallace
School Council President	Name: Alexa Every
Senior Education Improvement Leader	Name: Graham Stevenson
Accredited School Reviewer	Name: Libby Tudball
Review Company	Name: Monash University

1. Public section

1.1 SCHOOL CONTEXT

Location and history	Fairfield Primary School (Fairfield PS) is located in the City of Darebin in the inner city suburbs of Melbourne, approximately six kilometers from the Melbourne Central Business District. The school was founded in 1885.
School facilities	The buildings include the original main brick school and new portable structures. The school grounds include a large synthetic oval, a range of active play areas, including basketball and netball courts, passive play and seating areas. In 2015 the school completed the first stage of a Grounds Master Plan project that formed the basis for further playground development. The school facilities were enhanced with the addition of a double storey demountable in 2016, to meet the needs of increasing enrolments and has developed further landscaping and playground areas to embed the new building within the school master plan. In 2017 the school received a State Government grant of \$2.5 million to upgrade school facilities which will provide six classrooms in a new double storey building at the start of 2019. The school celebrated the opening of the Kaan Winya exploratory space that includes connections to local Indigenous culture in 2018. They also received funding from the Darebin City Council to build a competition grade sports court, equipped with floodlights. The next stage will include building of the recently acquired Wingrove Road site and redevelopment of the Foundation years teaching spaces.
Enrolments	Enrolments at the time of the review were approximately 492 students. Over the past four years, enrolments increased by 21 students.
SFO and SFOE	The Student Family Occupation (SFO) index was 0.13 and the Student Family Occupation Education (SFOE) index was 0.1 in 2017–18.
Staff profile	The staffing profile of Fairfield PS includes a Principal and Assistant Principal, 28.6 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) teachers, 1.1 FTE Education Support (ES) staff, 2.6 office administration staff and a qualified school nurse.
Curriculum	The Victorian Curriculum informed the development of the school's curriculum framework, which has been differentiated to meet student needs.
Additional information	The school provides an accredited Out of School Hours Care Program. Specialist programs provided for all students weekly included Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Physical Education (PE) and French Languages Other Than English (LOTE). The students participate in choir, orchestra and interschool sport. There is high level community support in a wide range of areas from classroom help, fundraising, grounds development and communications. There is an active and successful School Council that has been involved in the whole school improvement agenda.

Melbourne Feb-19

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1.2 SCHOOL HIGHLIGHTS

Highlight 1

Title: School Performing Arts/Visual Arts programs	Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO) Priority: Positive climate for learning	Dimension: Empowering students and building school pride
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The panel found that a key school highlight at Fairfield PS was the culture of creativity in the school developed through ongoing opportunities provided for all students to be involved in Performing Arts and Visual Arts programs. Students and parents interviewed said how much they enjoyed these experiences and how proud they felt of the performance achievements and the multiple art projects that enrich the school indoor and outdoor spaces at Fairfield PS. One example parents highly valued was the orchestra partnership with Thornbury High School, which provided opportunities for students to mix with older music students, and build their skills, confidence and community connections. The Art specialist programs included a range of artists in residence who enriched students' understanding of multiple art forms including puppetry, textiles, and mosaic work and inspired students to develop a range of skills and capabilities.

Highlight 2

Title: Developing planning for effective teaching and learning	FISO Priority: Excellence in teaching and learning	Dimension: Building practice excellence
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The panel saw evidence of a targeted focus on Building Practice Excellence through the implementation of a strategic approach to effective planning for teaching and learning that included high levels of collaboration amongst the staff. The school had commenced embedding the Curiosity and Powerful Learning framework and building consistent approaches to team planning. Teachers explained how they were utilising the Department of Education and Training (DET) Practice Principles and High Impact Teaching Strategies to improve their teaching and students' learning. The development and sharing of curriculum documents and whole-school approaches to the teaching of reading, writing and numeracy were being embedded across the school. There was an increased focus on developing strategies for differentiated learning based on the use of data to inform point of need teaching. The panel also saw that the school leaders ensured that structures were in place to support teachers to work in teams to build their teaching capabilities, and develop consistent practices to planning for learning and assessment.

Highlight 3

Title: Sense of community	FISO Priority: Community engagement in learning	Dimension: Parents and carers as partners
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The panel found that there is a strong communication between parents and teachers at Fairfield PS and they work together to develop the whole child through community activities that are co-planned. Parents provide great support to the school in the development of the school playgrounds and facilities and have a positive attitude to the school. At the time of the review all the children were excited about their 21st annual Art4all event where every student had a piece of art exhibited. Students in the upper primary years built their skills as waiters and caterers at the event.

1.3 SUMMARY OF KEY REVIEW FINDINGS

Performance against the School Strategic Plan (SSP) goals

SSP Goal 1:

The 2015–18 SSP for Fairfield PS set a goal to achieve high level outcomes in Literacy and Numeracy for all students.

The panel found that the school had achieved targets in some areas, but not all targets, for all students. Teachers had been involved in developing and embedding whole school strategies focused on improving the teaching of literacy and numeracy, but resulting improvement in student achievement was inconsistent. National Assessment Program–Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) results for Reading and Numeracy in Year 3 showed that student achievement had grown by 2018 in the top two bands. In Year 5, student achievement had grown in Reading, but declined in Numeracy and Writing. The panel concluded that the targets set for this goal were partially met.

SSP Goal 2:

The second goal was to develop resilient and self aware students who contribute to building an environment that is respectful, harmonious and supportive of others.

Through interviews with a cross section of parents and students, panel members found that the students were self aware, felt strongly connected to the school and were contributing to the development of a respectful and supportive school community. However, while achievement of the targets was not directly measurable due to a change in the survey structure, student Attitudes to School Survey (AToSS) data in different forms across 2015–18 consistently highlighted concerns around confidence and respect amongst students. The panel concluded that this goal was partially met.

SSP Goal 3:

The third goal was that all students will be highly connected to, motivated and engaged in their learning and to the broader school community. This was another goal where the format of the survey changed during the SSP period. The panel saw evidence of student connectedness, learning confidence and stimulating learning, during the review field work, but the survey data related to engagement overall (2014–16) was within the first and second quartiles in relation to Victorian government primary school students, and there was inconsistent data in relation to this data in 2017. The panel found that this goal was partially met.

Findings against the Terms of Reference (ToR) Focus Questions

ToR Focus Question 1: To what extent does Fairfield PS have structures and processes in place to reflect on and build practices for differentiated, point of need teaching in literacy?

The panel concluded that structures have been developed and processes were being embedded to build practices for differentiated, point of need teaching in literacy. However, it was evident that there was some variation in the consistency of application of practices and the use of data across year levels.

ToR Focus Question 2:

To what extent is Fairfield PS implementing pedagogical approaches and curriculum to build students' capabilities as identified in the Victorian curriculum?

The panel found that the school did not have a strong focus on the capabilities identified in the Victorian Curriculum in the last SSP. Panel discussions during the review identified this area as a recommended focus for the next SSP, particularly in the area of personal and social learning capability (SSP).

ToR Focus Question 3:

To what extent is Fairfield PS activating all students' voice, agency and leadership in their learning, so they have positive school experiences and can act as partners in school improvement?

The panel found that the DET focus in this area was not an element of the previous SSP. However, the panel noted that the school had some student leadership opportunities and avenues in place for students to follow their interests within the curriculum. However, there were few opportunities for students to consistently influence curriculum design and to provide feedback on the impact of teaching and learning for school improvement, so this was identified as an area for future focus.

1.4 SUMMARY OF KEY DIRECTIONS FOR THE NEXT SSP

The school review panel recommends the following key directions for the next SSP:

- Improve literacy, particularly reading and writing
- Build practice excellence in curriculum planning and assessment and develop data informed, point of need teaching
- Improve teacher capacity and shared focus on implementing High Impact Teaching Strategies
- Further embed the structures of the professional learning community
- Implement consistent health, wellbeing and engagement policy and practices
- Implement the Victorian Curriculum personal and social learning capability
- Build a positive climate for learning by involving the school community in a review and updating of the school's vision.
- Develop teachers' understanding of the DET initiatives in amplifying and activating student voice, agency and leadership
- Build student voice, agency and leadership to activate students' capacity to be involved in their own learning and wider school improvement processes related to school connectedness and wellbeing