

2018 Annual Report to The School Community



School Name: Yarra Me School (3552)



- 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 2018 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 29 April 2019 at 07:15 PM by Nancy Sidoti
(Principal)

- All teachers employed or engaged by the school council meet the registration requirements of the Victorian Institute of Teaching.
- To the extent that the school council is responsible, 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 2018 from the minimum standards for student enrolment numbers and/or curriculum framework for school language program.
- To the extent that the school council is responsible, 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 29 April 2019 at 07:36 PM by Nicholas Abbey
(School Council President)

About Our School

School context

“Learn Together. Succeed as One”

Yarra Me School is a Victorian State Government specialist school that exclusively addresses the educational needs of 'at-risk students' with significant social, emotional and behavioural challenges.

The students referred to Yarra Me School come from a range of backgrounds. Some of these include Trauma, Autism, Speech and Language Difficulties, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Foetal Alcohol Disorder, Attachment Disorder, Anxiety and Learning Difficulties. Students with these diagnoses often present with associated behaviours such as verbal and physical aggression, defiance, withdrawal, self-injury, helplessness and difficulties in forming and maintaining friendships.

Yarra Me School uses therapeutic and crisis prevention strategies to understand and respond to student behaviour, such as functional behaviour and safety plans. These Behaviour Support Plans are developed over time and inform strategies and actions for success. The School Wide Positive Support (SWPBS) framework is implemented across our intake and outreach programs. SWPBS builds a continuum of support for staff and students, which is supported by a three-tiered model. At each tier there is an emphasis on outcomes in the form of behaviour expectations for student and staff behaviour, and data to guide decision-making on the best practices needed to support student learning and social behaviour.

In 2018, Yarra Me School provided three intake programs across two locations, Hurstbridge and Preston, and three outreach services, these include the Inclusion Support Service, supporting students with challenging behaviours in the mainstream primary school setting, Secondary Consultation for a case conference to provide guidance to primary schools on complex student behaviours and a Professional Learning service providing specific training to educators and allied health professionals in the areas of Attachment and Trauma Theory and Autism training.

Each of the intake programs caters for different cohorts. The Preston campus runs two programs, the Junior Program catering for students in years one to three, and the Senior Program for students in years four to six. The education program at the Hurstbridge Farm is provided to students in Out of Home Care who reside in the Department of Health and Human Service residential facility.

The school has 16.3 equivalent full-time staff, made up of 2 Principal class, 13 teachers and 4 Education Support Staff.

The teachers at Yarra Me School work in dedicated teams within a multidisciplinary framework to provide the best educational outcomes for the students referred to the programs. Yarra Me School teachers work in collaboration with referring schools in a coaching role to develop a broader range of strategies to support students in Out-of-Home-Care and students presenting with challenging behaviours. The teachers are often involved in consultation, liaison and professional development to schools and other agencies.

Yarra Me School is committed to providing educational experiences which are responsive, flexible and personalised in meeting the needs of students. The school aims to successfully re-engage students with learning and develop a stronger connection with their main school. There is a focus on equipping students with skills in the Personal and Social Capability (Victorian Curriculum) so they can establish successful patterns in their lives and contribute positively to their community.

Our school empowers students by establishing relationships built on trust and an empathic understanding of the needs of the individual within a safe, supportive and inclusive environment.

Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO)

The Yarra Me School Strategic Plan 2015 – 2018 has captured six FISO initiatives and uses pre and post placement data to measure the effectiveness of the teaching programs and growth in improvements for students learning goals. As well our post data collection measures indicators of inclusion and success once our students re-integrate back to their main schools.

The Key Improvement Strategies under each of the FISO initiatives in the 2018 Annual Implementation Plan include:

Building practice excellence

- Implement and refine the innovative, personalised high interest curriculum which has been developed across the campuses
- Post placement data will track the continued use of the student's BSP at referring schools.
- Evaluation of the evidence based framework implementation through the 2015-2018 Strategic Plan

Curriculum planning and assessment

- Evaluate and promote the evidence based Yarra Me School Model that meets the specific needs of students with challenging behaviours.
- The school teaching staff utilising Victorian Curriculum to guide the development of PLP.
- Evaluate and promote the evidence based Yarra Me School Model that meets the specific needs of students with challenging behaviours

Building leadership teams

- Continue and strengthen partnerships with educational institutions and State and Federal Governments

Empowering students and building school pride

- Continue using refined FBA methodology.

Setting expectations and promoting inclusion

- Review the effectiveness of the RTI model with referring mainstream schools.
- Evaluate the partnership agreement with the referring schools and families.
- Evaluate and refine the schools assessment schedule.
- Revise and analyse student data. Incorporate a tracking system (3, 6 and 18 months post completion) to follow the PLPs of students who have exited the program.
- Continue to implement, evaluate and promote new evidence based programs.
- Review the fidelity of the SWPBS tiers.

Building communities

- 90% of referring schools utilising the RTI model, evaluation completed and suggestions incorporated and school continuing to identify and provide professional development for both Yarra Me School staff and referring schools
- Continue to implement and refine framework.

Achievement

Yarra Me School provides short term educational intervention programs that are designed to re-engage students with their learning and to help support the emotional and social learning provided by the intervention. Many students referred, experience significant challenges in Self-awareness, Self-management, Social awareness, Relationship skills and Positive Decision Making. These challenges impact on their self-confidence and their 'readiness to learn'. It is the focus of our work to develop a comprehensive, personalised intervention and learning plan for each student to ensure positive growth in their social and emotional goals. Prior to any student commencing in our programs, a comprehensive learning profile is developed from the student's educational and medical history, cognitive and speech assessments, family background and observations on peer relationships.

We are proud of our students' achievements across our intake programs at Hurstbridge and Preston. In 2018, 100% of the students exited the programs with quality Personalised Learning Plans and Behaviour Support

Plans. Academic entry levels are benchmarked to measure growth of each student in our programs. After a range of diagnostic assessments (WISC, CELF, SPAT, YARC, PAT Maths, PAT Reading) are captured and analysed, a Personalised Learning Plan is developed for each student that includes goals for literacy, numeracy, personal and interpersonal and attendance. When tracking individual achievement we are able to show significant progress against each student's learning, social skills and readiness to learn goals. Educational goals are set for each student and the progress towards the achievement of these goals is recorded on the student's individual Chronicle Profiles and reported to the Student Support Group.

Through 2018, 123 students were supported in total across the five programs delivered by Yarra Me School. Of these 91% were boys and 9% were girls. Primary School aged students made up the majority of student numbers, being 97.5%.

Schools referring to Yarra Me School are from three NWVR Areas: North East Melbourne Area (NEMA) 42.2%, Hume-Moreland Area 43.2%, and Loddon Campaspe Area 14.6%

In 2018, just over 20% of students enrolled at Yarra Me School were funded under 'Severe Behaviour' for Program for Students with Disability. Almost 33% of students referred to our programs had a diagnosis of Autism or were in the process of seeking this diagnosis. Over the past four years, the co-morbidity of the students referred to our service with Attention Deficit Disorder, Oppositional Defiance Disorder and Anxiety has increased to 33%; with only 15.3% have accessed Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, and only 15.6% with a Mental Health Care Plan prior to referral to Yarra Me School.

We have identified essential scaffolds in order for our students to succeed in our programs that are recommended for implementation at mainstream schools. These supports include 'personalised' learning plans, including individual SMART goals, Behaviour Support Plans within a Functional Behaviour Analysis framework and regular Student Support Group meetings.

Our post intervention data tracking system measures how well these scaffolds are implemented in mainstream schools at 3, 6, 12 and 18 months of leaving our programs.

At 3 months, we find positive data on students are 'always' attending school and are being supported by the Student Support Group and that schools are reviewing Personalised Learning Plans. However, only 62% of Behaviour Support Plans were reviewed, although an improvement on BSP figures in 2016 of 55%, it may be an indication that mainstream teachers require further support to undertake this work. As well in this 3 month period we find that the number of suspensions indicated by schools post intake intervention is 22%, and continues to increase to 60% at the 12 month mark. Of interest, these figures are lower for the outreach program which are 8% and 44% respectively. 18 month data on Student Support Group and the Personalised Learning and Behaviour Support Plans indicates that reviews are still occurring regularly. It is pleasing to see this improvement in mainstream school practice. It is important to note the positive attendance and enrolment data seen at the 18 month period revealing 78% for school attendance and 90% for stability in enrolments.

In 2018 the focus for further developing teacher skills was on achieving moderation in SMART goal setting and in the area of curriculum planning, mapping the Victorian Curriculum to the students' Personalised Learning Plans. These improvements were evidenced in teacher Performance and Development Plans for 2018 and were also firmly indicated by the results of the 2018 School Staff Survey: Professional Learning Summary Module being 85.7%. Of note, the Special School state average for Professional Learning Summary Module was 69.9%.

The moderation of student goals in Personalised Learning Plans will continue in 2019, with the implementation taking place across the Yarra Me School programs.

Engagement

Yarra Me School seeks to engage students directly in our programs by the provision of high interest, personalised learning plans. We also work to engage students in their base schools through the negotiation of positive support plans. Our school recognises that the social, physical and emotional wellbeing of students supports effective learning. Therefore the emphasis of all individual learning programs is developed in line with the wellbeing needs of each student. Relationships are key to all our work with students and schools. We aim to build positive, supportive relationships with all students with a focus on their abilities and strengths. We do this by using individual goal setting plans and advocating for the learning needs of individual students.

Student attendance data for 2018 indicates that whole school attendance average was 79.5%. (Note the percentage reported in the Performance Summary is inaccurate, and does not take into account transition days at mainstream school) Non-attendance by students is also managed through immediate individual follow up with families/carers and mainstream school support personnel. However of concern is the growing number of students referred to our service who are attending school on a 'part time basis'. Whilst it is important to consider the student's needs, as well as plan for a successful transition to a new school, it is our expectation that our students attend school full time. Whilst, Yarra Me School will do everything to advocate for students' full time attendance at school, this is an area that requires a DET system response as these concerns are also identified by the Ombudsman's Report into School Expulsions 2017

We have continued to develop and enhance professional learning and capacity building opportunities through the provision of our outreach work provided to referring schools, and promoting School Wide Positive Behaviour Support, Attachment and Trauma Theory and Autism specific resources. A major part of the teachers' role at Yarra Me School is to provide specialist consultation to teachers and leadership teams in primary schools. A summary of the Outreach Supports provided by Yarra Me School teachers to mainstream schools in 2018 is broken down as follows:

- * Teacher Meetings 31%
- * In class support 30%
- * Classroom observation 21%
- * SSG 10%
- * Student Counselling 6%
- * Parent/carer meeting 2%

As the outreach work is based on a coaching model, all Yarra Me School teachers completed the two day Growth Coaching Introduction to Leadership Coaching in 2018. This training provided our teachers with specific skills and resources to managed a diverse range of challenges experienced in mainstream schools.

In 2018 a number of targeted professional development sessions were provided to mainstream schools by our outreach staff with the aim of providing greater understanding of students with trauma history and how to best address their learning needs in the classroom. In 2018, 105 educators completed the Attachment and Trauma Theory (ATT) course. The Pre collected from educators revealed that only 32% rated their skills as 'Comprehensive' in planning and implementing interventions for students with attachment and trauma needs, and on completion of the 20 hours professional learning in the ATT course this figure rose to 98%

Over each term in 2018, Yarra Me School delivered professional learning in Autism Executive Functioning to educators. 43 people completed this course. In 2019, this course will be made more widely available through a webinar platform, making this learning more accessible to regional and rural areas.

In 2018, we had three teachers in the metropolitan area and one teacher based in Bendigo providing an outreach only service to mainstream primary schools. Feedback from leadership teams for this on-site support has been very strong The Pre collected from teachers and leadership teams revealed that only 15% rated their skills prior to the commencement of the outreach service as 'Comprehensive' in planning and implementing interventions for students with additional needs, and on completion of the Inclusion Support Service, this figure rose to 78%

Wellbeing

Wellbeing of students is of paramount importance at Yarra Me School.

Students referred to the Yarra Me School programs commonly have one or more significant wellbeing issues that have interfered with their learning. Our focus is on supporting them to find real solutions to enable them to develop greater self-confidence which in turn is applied to academic achievement.

The School Wide Positive Behaviour Support Program provides the framework for establishing a safe and collaborative environment. Explicit teaching of emotional regulation supports students to increasingly manage self. Transactional supports to promote and negotiate positive outcomes, the establishment of school and class rules consistent with our school values, the implementation of reward systems are all effective tools for promoting improved self-management, safety and wellbeing. Student Profiles on Compass Chronicle have been maintained for all students providing key information specific to the student. Implementation strategies support the identification and development of Behaviour Support Plans and interventions external to the school.

As a specialist school working with students with challenging and escalating behaviours, the wellbeing and safety (for all members of the Yarra Me School community) became a management priority for the leadership team. Data from the 2018 School Staff Survey affirm that leadership responded quickly to safety concerns with 80.3% in comparison to the special school state average of 58.2%. Key to timely responses to safety, is the high level of staff consultation and participation in this area, 84.86% in comparison to the special school state average of 71.11%

The leadership team maintains rigorous safety and wellbeing processes which included strengthening School Wide Positive Behaviour Support through professional workshops, and whole school reviews of 'Critical Incident Response', and in the development of risk Management Plan's for complex student referrals, and regular case conferencing by teachers to support challenging student behaviour.

Financial performance and position

End of 2018 financial position includes a surplus of \$130,989.

The majority of this surplus will be expended on building works at Preston East as a number of repairs and building modifications have been necessary post the finalisation of the Capital Works Program In addition to this, new ICT servers and equipment are needed to be purchased and installed at Hurstbridge, as the hardware is over ten years old.

In 2018, Yarra Me School received a grant of \$5,000 from the Stephanie Alexander Food to Table Program. This was spent on a dishwasher, cooking utensils and new furniture for the student canteen. A grant of \$4,022 was provided by the Armistice Centenary Grant, Department of Veterans' Affairs in 2018 to have three flag poles installed at the front of the school.

For more detailed information regarding our school please visit our website at
<http://www.yarrame.vic.edu.au/>

Performance Summary

The Government School Performance Summary 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.

Members of the community can contact the school for an accessible version of these data tables if required.

Key: Range of results for the middle 60% of Victorian Government Special Schools:  Results for this school:  Median of all Victorian Government Special Schools: 

School Profile

Enrolment Profile

A total of 0 students were enrolled at this school in 2018, 0 female and 0 male.

0 percent were EAL (English as an Additional Language) students and 0 percent ATSI (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) students.

Overall Socio-Economic Profile

Based on the school's Student Family Occupation and Education index which takes into account parents' occupations and education.

No Data Available due to the unique characteristics of this school

Parent Satisfaction Summary

Measures the percent endorsement by parents on their school satisfaction level, as reported in the annual *Parent Opinion Survey*. The percent endorsement indicates the percent of positive responses (agree or strongly agree).

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

No Data Available due to the unique characteristics of this school

School Staff Survey

Measures the percent endorsement by staff on School Climate, as reported in the annual *School Staff Survey*. The percent endorsement indicates the percent of positive responses (agree or strongly agree).

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



Performance Summary

Achievement	Student Outcomes
<p>Teacher Judgement of student achievement</p> <p>Percentage of students working at each Standard in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> English Mathematics <p>For further details refer to <i>How to read the Annual Report</i>.</p>	<p>No Data Available due to the unique characteristics of this school</p> <hr/> <p>No Data Available due to the unique characteristics of this school</p>

Performance Summary

Engagement	Student Outcomes												
<p>Average Number of Student Absence Days</p> <p>Average days absent per full time equivalent (FTE) student per year. Common reasons for non-attendance include illness and extended family holidays.</p> <p>Absence from school can impact on students' learning.</p> <p>Please note: Student attendance data for 2018 indicates that whole school attendance average was 79.5%. (Note the percentage reported in the Performance Summary is inaccurate, and does not take into account transition days at mainstream school)</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>2015</th> <th>2016</th> <th>2017</th> <th>2018</th> <th>4-year average</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Average absence days</td> <td>ND</td> <td>32.9</td> <td>ND</td> <td>30.1</td> <td>31.5</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	2015	2016	2017	2018	4-year average	Average absence days	ND	32.9	ND	30.1	31.5
Year	2015	2016	2017	2018	4-year average								
Average absence days	ND	32.9	ND	30.1	31.5								
<p>Exit destinations</p> <p>Percentage of students transitioning to a mainstream setting</p> <p>Note: With the exception of students enrolled at the Hurstbridge Program, all other student referred to the Yarra Me School programs are enrolled at a mainstream state primary school in the North Western Victoria Region</p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>2015</th> <th>2016</th> <th>2017</th> <th>2018</th> <th>4-year average</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>% of students transition to mainstream/alternative schools</td> <td>100.0</td> <td>100.0</td> <td>100.0</td> <td>100.0</td> <td>100.0</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	2015	2016	2017	2018	4-year average	% of students transition to mainstream/alternative schools	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Year	2015	2016	2017	2018	4-year average								
% of students transition to mainstream/alternative schools	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0								

Financial Performance and Position

Commentary on the financial performance and position is included in the About Our School section at the start of this report

Financial Performance - Operating Statement Summary for the year ending 31 December, 2018		Financial Position as at 31 December, 2018	
Revenue	Actual	Funds Available	Actual
Student Resource Package	\$2,135,651	High Yield Investment Account	\$96,162
Government Provided DET Grants	\$273,878	Official Account	\$34,827
Government Grants Commonwealth	\$3,300	Total Funds Available	\$130,989
Revenue Other	\$32,441		
Locally Raised Funds	\$9,902		
Capital Grants	\$16,215		
Total Operating Revenue	\$2,471,386		
Equity¹			
Equity (Social Disadvantage)	\$5,000		
Equity Total	\$5,000		
Expenditure		Financial Commitments	
Student Resource Package ²	\$1,976,373	Operating Reserve	\$49,421
Books & Publications	\$927	Other Recurrent Expenditure	\$1,568
Communication Costs	\$11,816	School Based Programs	\$32,000
Consumables	\$33,996	Capital - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months	\$48,000
Miscellaneous Expense ³	\$269,200	Total Financial Commitments	\$130,989
Professional Development	\$44,295		
Property and Equipment Services	\$101,983		
Salaries & Allowances ⁴	\$38,304		
Travel & Subsistence	\$11,943		
Utilities	\$8,354		
Adjustments	\$0		
Total Operating Expenditure	\$2,497,191		
Net Operating Surplus/-Deficit	(\$25,805)		
Asset Acquisitions	\$0		

(1) The Equity funding reported above is a subset of overall revenue reported by the school

(2) Student Resource Package Expenditure figures are as of 15 March 2019 and are subject to change during the reconciliation process.

(3) Misc Expenses may include bank charges, health and personal development, administration charges, camp/excursion costs and taxation charges.

(4) Salaries and Allowances refers to school-level payroll.

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.

How to read the Annual Report

What does the *About Our School* section refer to?

The About Our School page provides a brief background on the school, an outline of the school's performance over the year and plans for the future.

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 'Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO)' section includes the improvement initiatives the school has selected and the progress they have made towards achieving them

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

The Performance Summary reports on data in key areas:

Achievement

Student achievements in :

- English and Mathematics

Engagement

- student attendance and engagement at school
- how many students leaving school go on to further studies or full-time work (secondary, P-12 and specialist schools)

What is the meaning of '*Data not available*' or '*ND*' mean?

Some schools have too few students enrolled to provide data. There may be no students enrolled in some year levels, so school comparisons are not possible.

New schools have only the latest year of data and no comparative data from previous years.

The Department also recognises unique circumstances in Specialist, Select Entry, English Language and Community Schools where school-to-school comparisons are not appropriate.

Towards Foundation Level Victorian Curriculum

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 a disability or students who may have additional learning needs.