

School Review Report 2020 – 2024 Cycle

Whorouly Primary School

1373

North Eastern Victoria Region

Validation Day: 19th November 2020

Final Panel Day: 3rd December 2020

Strategic Plan 2017-2020



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1. Public section

1.1 SCHOOL CONTEXT	
Location and history	Whorouly Primary School is located in a small rural township, 30 kilometres southeast of Wangaratta, in North-East Victoria. The school has served its local district since 1874.
School facilities	<p>The school's main building combines the façade of an older structure with a modernised addition. Located within this building are the school's general office and principal's office, a teacher resource room and staff facilities, the library and four classroom spaces. A large covered deck was recently added to this building to provide an outdoor eating and learning area. Also located on the school grounds is an Art Shed, a kitchen garden, a large, grassed playing area and adventure playground, and a hard court.</p> <p>The Whorouly Pre-School is adjacent to the school grounds.</p>
Enrolments	Enrolments at the time of the review were 31 students. Enrolments had remained relatively stable during the period since the school's last review.
SFO and SFOE	The Student Family Occupation (SFO) category was 0.50 in 2019 and the Student Family Occupation Education (SFOE) index was 0.426 in 2019–20.
Staff profile	The staffing profile of Whorouly Primary School includes a teaching principal and two classroom teachers (1.6 full time equivalent – FTE), three part-time Education Support (ES) staff members, and a 0.5 FTE Business Manager. Part-time specialist teachers, along the classroom teachers, deliver Library, Art, Italian, Music and Science programs.
Curriculum	<p>The school provides an approved curriculum framework, differentiated to meet student needs and based on the Victorian Curriculum. Two classrooms operate for part of the week (Years F-2 and Years 3-6). At other times during the week, the school offers smaller class groupings of Years F-2, Years 3-4 and Years 5-6.</p> <p>Extra-curricular programs include camps, a Kitchen Garden Program, a health and sport participation program, and cluster activities.</p>
Additional information	<p>The school is a base school for the Mobile Area Arts Centre (MACC) van that serves a number of cluster schools. The school works closely with cluster schools to strengthen professional learning opportunities for teachers, and to provide wider social interaction for students. Along with this arrangement, the school engages regularly with the Whorouly Pre-School and Play Group to support transitions for young children.</p> <p>A chaplain offers pastoral care to students, families and staff.</p>

1.2 SCHOOL & COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHTS

Highlight 1

Title: Community and Family Engagement

FISO dimension: Building communities

The Panel found that a key highlight during the period of the previous Strategic Plan (SSP) had been the school's deliberate and successful work in building and strengthening its engagement with parents and the wider school community.

The school had developed a number of events that drew parents and other community members into the school, including a Welcome Barbeque, Open Days, a Family STEM Challenge, Library After Dark, and a Wellbeing Day. These activities had formed a regular calendar of events throughout the year, and had been well-attended by families from across the school.

The Panel heard that these events had been highly valued by families, and had led to a number of parents and members of the community increasing their engagement with the school to support Parents' Club activities and fundraisers. Improvements to the school's outdoor facilities had been enabled by this parent and community support, with the popularity of a 'buy a brick' paved pathway enabling the purchase of shade sails and improvement of the playground area. Catering at local events by parents and students had also raised sufficient funds to add to the school's extra-curricular offerings and that had directly benefitted students and their families.

Highlight 2

Title: Specialist Programs in Music and Science

FISO dimension: Strategic resource management

The Panel agreed that a second school community highlight had been the school's offering of specialist programs in Music/Performing Arts and in Science.

The school had been able to re-introduce an end-of-year musical production in 2017, where all students had showcased the learning they had done in the Music program throughout the year. This production had drawn on the talents of staff, students, parents and local community members and had been held in the local community hall. All students had performed during the show. A large audience had attended the event. In 2020, the school had again allocated resources to the provision of a specialist program in this area and had planned to hold another whole school musical. This had been postponed due to the restrictions on social gatherings in place at the time.

The school had also invested in provision of a specialist Science program. Students told the Panel that this had given them additional opportunities to learn about Science and to develop their interests in this area. Parents also affirmed the quality of the school's curriculum offerings and expressed high levels of approval for the way the school had catered for their children's interests and passions in learning.

Highlight 3

Title: Kitchen Garden Program

FISO dimension: Empowering students and building school pride

The Panel found that a third community highlight was the school's participation in a Kitchen Garden Program. This program had been implemented to provide Years 3-6 students the opportunity to learn cooking and gardening skills. The school had deliberately focused on complementing existing health and wellbeing programs by teaching students about healthy eating, hygiene and food safety requirements as part of this program. The gardening program had been integrated into other curriculum areas such as English, Maths and Geography units of work, during which students discovered and trialled different food recipes from around the world.

The Personal and Social Capability curriculum, along with other Capabilities, had also been integrated in the teaching during this gardening program; with working together in teams an important focus for the program. The school had found that maintaining the gardens encouraged pride and care for the school environment, and students had valued the ability to grow their own food. This program had been well-established and embedded within school events, with students catering for different activities, using the food harvested from the garden. Parents and the school chaplain had offered additional support to ensure the garden was wellmaintained.

The Panel agreed that this had been a school community highlight during the period of the previous SSP.

1.3 SUMMARY OF KEY REVIEW FINDINGS

Performance against the School Strategic Plan (SSP) goals and targets

SSP Goal 1:

The 2017-2020 School Strategic Plan's first goal was to build the capacity of staff to deliver consistent quality teaching practice. The Panel found that the school partially met this goal, with two of the three targets achieved.

SSP Goal 2:

The second goal was to ensure consistent levels of learning growth for every student in Literacy and Numeracy; with three targets related to NAPLAN relative growth and school-based assessments of students' learning. The Panel found the school partially met this goal, with one of the three targets achieved.

Goal 3:

The third goal set was to strengthen the school as a Learning Community. The Panel found that the school had also partially met this goal, with two of the five targets achieved.

Findings against the Terms of Reference Focus Questions

Terms of Reference Focus Question 1: To what extent do the school's assessment practices influence planning for differentiated teaching and differentiated learning tasks?

The Panel found that a whole-school assessment schedule, and approaches to the collection and analysis of data had been developed. The Panel heard that all students had Individual Education Plans (IEPs), along with short-term learning goals, and that these had been regularly reviewed and refined in consultation with students and parents. The Panel agreed that the school had made considerable improvements in the use of data in planning for student learning during the period of the previous SSP, and that these improved systems were becoming embedded.

Terms of Reference Focus Question 2: To what extent are the agreed instructional models implemented with integrity and consistency in all classrooms? The Panel found that teachers and students could describe the elements of the school's instructional models, and that these elements could be observed to be implemented in lessons for Reading and Mathematics. The school had identified that the teaching of Writing was evolving at the time of the review. Teachers' documents reflected consistency in planning templates and these templates had been structured around the instructional models. The Panel observed that the reflection and review element of the models still had areas for practice improvement.

Terms of Reference Focus Question 3: To what extent are there mechanisms to support quality feedback and reflection on learning?

The Panel found that students had learning goals in Reading and Numeracy. These had been developed with their teachers and had been reflected on during each week. Students explained to the Panel that these goals had helped them to understand the purpose for tasks set by the teacher, and that these tasks had been differentiated to match their goals. The Panel heard teachers engaging in feedback and reflection with students, however, the Panel agreed that there was an opportunity to strengthen the quality of the feedback to maximise its impact on learning growth.

1.4 SUMMARY OF KEY DIRECTIONS FOR THE NEXT SCHOOL STRATEGIC PLAN

The School Review Panel recommends the following key directions for the next School Strategic Plan:

- The teaching of Literacy and Numeracy, with a particular focus on developing students' Writing
- A Professional Learning Communities approach to strengthen the use of data in planning for differentiation, and to monitor the impact on students' learning
- High impact teaching strategies with a particular focus on Questioning, Feedback and Metacognitive Strategies

