

School Review Report 2019 – 2023 Cycle



Mernda Park Primary School

School Number: 5525

North Eastern Victoria Region

Validation Day: 28 August 2019

Final Panel Day: 13 September 2019

School Principal	Name: Mary Ryan
School Council President	Name: Kathy Duffield
Senior Education Improvement Leader	Name: David Kilmartin
School Reviewer	Name: Joan Sibley Review company: Valad Solutions
Challenge Partner 1	Name: Brooke Streatfeild
Challenge Partner 2	Name: Jason McBean

Melbourne Oct-20

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1. Public section

1.1 SCHOOL CONTEXT

Location and history	Mernda Park Primary School is located in the City of Whittlesea and is approximately 30 kilometres from the Melbourne Central Business District. The school was opened in January 2017. The school was constructed under the Public Private Partnership (PPP) model which means that the school was financed, designed, constructed and will be maintained by the private sector for the contract period of 25 years.
School facilities	The school consists of three main learning communities, each with defined learning spaces; break out areas, art and craft areas and a shared library space. An indoor multi-purpose hall and canteen area are accommodated in another wing of the school. The grounds have active and passive areas including two adventure playgrounds, basketball and netball courts, an oval and sculptured soft fall areas.
Enrolments	Enrolments at the time of the review were approximately 270 students. Since opening in 2017, enrolments increased by approximately 200 students.
SFO and SFOE	The Student Family Occupation Education (SFOE) index was 0.3967 in 2019.
Staff profile	The staffing profile of Mernda Park Primary School includes a Principal and Assistant Principal, 15 teachers and 5.62 full time equivalent Education Support (ES) staff. The leadership team consists of two Principal Class Officers and two Teacher Learning Specialists.
Curriculum	The school provides an approved curriculum framework based on the Victorian curriculum and differentiated to meet student needs.
Additional information	The PPP model allows school staff to focus on student learning rather than maintenance and asset management. As part of the PPP model, partner enterprises work closely with the school to provide curriculum support and to foster a sense of community. The YMCA in conjunction with Whittlesea Council operate an Early Learning Centre and a Kindergarten on the school site. The school offers students access to digital technologies and elearning opportunities including coding, robotic engineering and programming.

1.2 SCHOOL HIGHLIGHTS

Highlight 1

Title: Instructional model for writing	FISO Priority: Excellence in teaching and learning	Dimension: Evidence based high impact teaching strategies
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The Panel found that a key school highlight was the school's development and implementation of an evidence based instructional model for writing. They agreed that it was demonstrated by:

- the implementation of rigorous, ongoing professional learning to build knowledge of all staff of the evidence based writing model
- the implementation of school practices and processes, such as peer observations and feedback, which supported staff to assess and refine the model
- building staff knowledge through collegiate visits to schools who had the model embedded
- the appointment of Learning specialists to model and support the teaching of writing using the Instructional model
- the strengthening of home school engagement in writing through events such as the school's annual Writers Festival.

Highlight 2

Title: Positive Community Engagement in Learning	FISO Priority: Community engagement in learning	Dimension: Parents and Careers as partners
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The Panel agreed that the school had invested in a range of processes and practices, which supported a positive learning culture at the school. The Panel found that this key school highlight was evidenced by the following strategies and actions:

- before opening in 2017, the school hosted public information forums
- leadership met with every student and their family prior to the opening of the school
- the school, along with community partners, a community BBQ and activity afternoons
- the school hosted four year old kinder students for library and activity sessions
- the school conducted Mothers' Day afternoon teas, a Fathers' Day BBQ, and an 'Ask Gran not Google' afternoon.
- the opening of Learning Communities to families and community during Literacy/Numeracy Week, Book Week and Education Week
- the collaboration with the local council, service providers and businesses to provide students with opportunities to perform in their local community
- the provision of opportunities for students and their families to engage with the school through dance programs, sports events and community BBQs.

Highlight 3

Title: Where creativity meets technology	FISO Priority: Positive climate for learning	Dimension: Intellectual engagement and self awareness
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The Panel found that a key school highlight was the provision of elearning and the opportunity for students to be highly engaged with technology. This highlight was evidenced by the following actions and strategies:

- the creation, financing and staffing of coding sessions which focused on collaboration and creativity in coding using obsolete technology items
- the creation of a Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) lunchtime club for girls which focused on robotics and programming. The school partnered with the University of Melbourne to support this initiative
- the schools participation in STEAM competitions which provided students with the opportunity to showcase their learning
- successful submissions for grants to support the schools technology initiatives
- staff use of devices and apps to gauge interest and collect data from students and parents.

1.3 SUMMARY OF KEY REVIEW FINDINGS

Performance against the school's Annual Implementation Plan goals. Note that the school opened in 2017 and did not have a School Strategic Plan.

Goal 1:

Mernda Park Primary School set a goal to build teacher capacity to use a consistent teaching approach, effectively analyse data and accurately assess achievement, to ensure challenge and progress for every student in writing. The Panel found that the school partially met this goal, with one of the four targets met, one partially met and two not met.

SSP Goal 2:

The second goal was to enhance and promote student voice, agency and decision making across the school. The Panel found that overall the school partially met this goal, with one target partially met and one not met.

SSP Goal 3:

The third goal was to develop a whole school approach to ensure a safe, equitable and respectful school environment. The Panel found that this goal was partially met with one target met and the other not met.

Findings against the Terms of Reference Focus Questions

Terms of Reference Focus Question 1: To what extent is student voice and agency embedded in all aspects of the school?

The Panel found that a calm, organised and respectful learning environment supported all students to be engaged with learning. Students throughout the school were provided with charts, visual aids and scaffolding to support their learning. The Panel considered that the strategies that established students as authentic partners in learning was evolving throughout the school.

Terms of Reference Focus Question 2: To what extent do the school's processes and practices support teachers to place the student at the centre of program planning and delivery?

The Panel noted the implementation of a whole-school instructional model. They concluded that there was consistent use of explicit teaching, effective questioning and differentiated learning tasks to suit all learners. Processes and practices which supported teachers to deliver the schools agreed curriculum were embedded across all areas of the school.

1.4 SUMMARY OF KEY DIRECTIONS FOR THE NEXT SSP

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

- literacy particularly improving outcomes in reading and writing
- numeracy particularly increasing percentages of students in top bands
- student empowerment in learning.