

2022 Annual Report to the School Community

School Name: Niddrie Autistic School (5362)



- 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 of the previous calendar year 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 16 May 2023 at 05:28 PM by Paige Davey (Principal)

- This 2022 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 20 June 2023 at 10:43 AM by Melanie Mumford (School Council President)

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).

Considering COVID-19 when interpreting the Performance Summary

The Victorian community's experience of COVID-19 had a significant impact on normal school operations over the past three years. This impacted the conduct of assessments and surveys. Readers should be aware of this when interpreting the Performance Summary, particularly when interpreting trend data.

For example, in 2020 and 2021 school-based surveys ran under changed circumstances, and NAPLAN was not conducted in 2020. Further, absence and attendance data during this period may have been affected by the level of COVID-19 in the community and may be influenced by local processes and procedures adopted in response to remote and flexible learning.

Readers should keep this in mind when viewing and interpreting the data presented in the Annual Report.

How to read the Annual Report (continued)

What does 'NDP' or 'NDA' mean?

'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

Niddrie Autistic School has at its foundation a reputation for providing an exemplary education for students with autism from Prep to Year 3. There is a commitment to excellence, which is communicated, to staff, students and families. Members of staff have high expectations and a belief that every child can learn and achieve. The school has profound expertise in developing and implementing Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) and in assessing and monitoring the learning of students to ensure the goals are achieved.

Niddrie Autistic School is situated 16 kms north of the Central Business District (CBD) in the suburb of Niddrie. The school enrolls students diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder. The philosophy of the school is to provide an intensive program for students with autism to build their social communication and sense of self and others which will guide their inclusion and participation through their early years of schooling and beyond. Our school values are respect, collaboration, diversity, learning as an ongoing process, and sharing and growth of knowledge.

To support the needs of autistic children and their families, the school provides initial support for each student as he/she moves to their designated neighbourhood mainstream or specialist school setting. We are committed to supporting autistic students beyond our school by providing professional learning and advice to our community schools.

In 2022 the enrolment at its maximum was 96 students, 18 female and 78 male. 24 percent of students had English as an additional language. The majority of students travel from a wide geographical area and travel to Niddrie by a contract bus service. The enrolment numbers have been consistent for the previous 3 years, we are predicting growth by 2 classrooms for 2023 based on the 2022 expressions of interest.

The school's SFOE band is low-medium. The school has a total of 58 staff with an Equivalent Full Time (EFT) staff of 44.2 comprised of 1 Principal Class personnel, 2 leading teachers, 5 learning specialists 16.4 EFT Teachers, 19.07 Education Support staff, 0.6 EFT Occupational Therapist and a business manager. Our team teaching model is essential to the delivery of the specialised program, this is enabled by a classroom teacher ratio of 1.6 teacher to 8 children in each classroom, with all classrooms having 3 educators to deliver the programs.

Progress towards strategic goals, student outcomes and student engagement

Learning

Given the particular learning needs of our students, we prioritise expressive and receptive communication, functional adaptive and social skills development. These goals are addressed through Individual Learning Plans (ILP) for each student, delivered within the framework of the Victorian Curriculum.

Parents indicated high levels of satisfaction with their child's education via the parent opinion survey responses; The physical environment influences our students success and engagement at school, the families gave 100% positive response to "This school has clean and well-maintained facilities and grounds" This is testament to the newly completed classrooms and extensive playgrounds. Overall, I am satisfied with the education my child receives from this school 89% positive response. This school always aims to improve the quality of education it provides 89% positive response. I feel confident that this school provides a good standard of education for my child 83%. This school always aims to improve the quality of education it provides 89% This school celebrates student achievements in all areas 86%

Families have recognised the effectiveness of our teachers motivating and engaging the children in their learning responding 92% positively to "Teachers are enthusiastic and positive about teaching" and 89% positive response to "the teachers are very good at making learning engaging"

We continue the focus developed from our school review in 2021, a clear strategic direction for the next four years which includes, developing a school wide approach to teaching literacy and numeracy for students with ASD, developing a school-wide approach to data collection and analysis to evaluate student learning growth over time through an embedded PLC process, strengthening opportunities for student voice, agency and leadership, strengthening family participation as active partners in their child's learning and development and developing a whole school approach to seamless transition.

Wellbeing

Health and wellbeing of students, families and staff were a continued priority in 2022. This is evident by the high percentage of approval in the parent feedback survey, with an overall school endorsement of 89% up from 85.2% in 2021.

Wellbeing for our students is strongly associated with the development of their expressive communication skills. This has been emphasised in the school's Professional Learning Program, with the implementation of Professional Learning Communities focussing on continually improving individual student assessment to provide accurate and targeted communication goals.

The school prioritised wellbeing for students and staff, in recognition of the 2 previous years impacted by remote or hybrid teaching models. The school implemented a wellbeing improvement team consisting of a leading teacher and 2 learning specialists. The teams focus was to align their work across the school with the Wellbeing A.I.P. key improvement strategies. This included the introduction of Junior School Council providing opportunities for leadership and student voice. Improving the experience of the students transitioning from the previous class has been a priority with the parent survey indicating 93% positive response to "My child has been supported this year to adjust to his/her new year level".

To support student's positive behaviour programs we employed additional education support staff to enable intensive teaching programs to focus on specific skill development for students that were identified as requiring additional support.

We consulted with Dr. Erin Lief, Monash University, and as a whole school team reflected on the draft of the Wellbeing Multi Tiered System of Support (MTSS).

Our parent opinion survey results in the area of school support indicate high levels of satisfaction; The percentage response to "I feel comfortable about approaching this school with any concerns I might have" was 92% positive, up from 90% in 2021. The percentage response to "This school takes parents' concerns seriously" was 86% , up from 83% in 2021.

Student self esteem and confidence is an important factor to their wellbeing, the schools contribution to the students self esteem and confidence was also recognised in the parent opinion survey; The school provides my child with opportunities to build his/her confidence 90%

Respect is one of our founding values, again pivotal to wellbeing, this area is supported strongly by our families opinions; Respect for diversity 90% positive response. This school treats my child with respect 95%. My child has been supported this year to adjust to his/her new year level 93% positive response.

Engagement

2022 was uninterrupted by remote or hybrid learning, the aim was to fully engage students back into onsite schooling after disruptions caused by COVID19.

Students being engaged with their learning is always a high priority, and parents recognised the teachers expertise in providing engaging learning via the parent opinion survey; The teachers are very good at making learning engaging 89% This school gives my child opportunities to participate in school activities 90 %.

Engagement with families during 2022, was at a high level, this is reflected in the parent opinion survey with a high response rate that indicated; I feel this school values parents' contributions 86% Teachers provide useful feedback and respond to the learning needs of my child 87%

Our school had an average of 32.5 days of absence per student. It is not unusual for students with ASD to be challenged by attending school due to the high degree of social communication demands. To support their children's wellbeing families may choose to keep their child home for a break from school. Other influencing factors include high rates of absence due to the need to follow COVID safe protocols, student's even with the mildest cold/flu symptoms did not attend school.

During our school review process students had the opportunity to provide feedback about their schooling. The process that was developed to enable all students to have a voice and participate was highly successful. We will continue to develop means to incorporate student voice into our school wide processes.

Other highlights from the school year

To add to our engagement and wellbeing strategies the school invested in exceptional incursion activities. These included the incredible successful artists in residence company Playfully, a company that creates bespoke theatre incursions for schools, kindergartens, and other community groups. The approach is collaborative, they worked closely with the school to tailor the program to our specific needs. Playfully places children at the centre of the creative process, amplifying their voices to create empowering, engaging, and accessible programs. The collaboration with students resulted in "Blast Off," an eight-week intergalactic journey through space that explored different emotions through sensory play.

Our Prep students enjoyed an Art Therapy program and the whole school enjoyed African Drumming and productions by the Flying Bookworm Theatre Company.

Camp resumed for our Grade 2 and 3 aged students in 2022, with all of the children and educators returning to Caloola House in Port Arlington.

We embraced many extra curricular opportunities that the children had missed during the COVID lockdowns in order to enrich their learning experience.

Financial performance

Niddrie Autistic School had a total operating revenue of \$6,997,837 in 2022. The operating revenue was comprised of funding from the Student Resource Package (SRP) (\$6,011,052), other DET grants (\$964,425) State Government Grants (\$10,000), and other locally raised funds (\$12,359). The school received \$23,524 in Equity Funding, which was used to support funding the Wellbeing and Teaching and Learning staff. This includes leading teachers and learning specialists who focused on supporting students learning in the areas of numeracy and mobilise available resources to support students' wellbeing and mental health, especially the most vulnerable.

The school's total operating expenditure for 2022 was \$5,723,125. All funds expended were used to improve the learning outcomes and wellbeing of our students, this encompasses their learning program and learning environment.

While there were no lockdowns or remote learning in 2022, the school was impacted by COVID-19 and other illnesses as well as the teacher shortage. The CRT budget was the highest expenditure item, totaling \$485,486. This is a reduction from previous years, which is a direct result of the teacher shortage and the school's inability to book casual staff to fill teacher vacancies.

The school was unable to hire a speech pathologist for 2022, School Council continued with the contractual arrangement with a third party to provide speech therapy services for the school. The cost of this in 2022 was \$139,142.

The school ended the year with a net surplus of \$1,274,712. This surplus is due in part to the teacher shortage and the school not being able to hire all teachers required and also the residual funds from the de-amalgamation process. School Council will utilise these funds to continue the upgrade and refurbishment of the old building and also upgrade the outside areas of the school to create engaging and fun learning spaces for our students.

The school leadership team and School Council continue to manage the school finances within DE policy and guidelines to support the achievement of educational outcomes and the operational needs of the school.

For more detailed information regarding our school please visit our website at www.niddrieautisticschool.vic.edu.au

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 96 students were enrolled at this school in 2022, 18 female and 78 male.

24 percent of students had English as an additional language and 0 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).

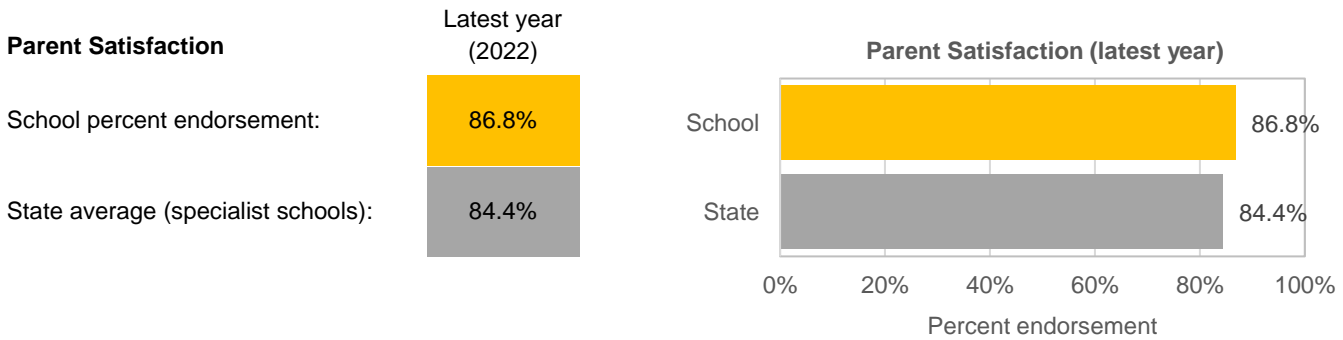
SFOE is a measure of socio-educational disadvantage of a school, based on educational and employment characteristics of the parents/carers of students enrolled at the school. Possible SFOE band values are: Low, Low-Medium, Medium and High. A 'Low' band represents a low level of socio-educational disadvantage, a 'High' band represents a high level of socio-educational disadvantage.

This school's SFOE band value is: Low - Medium

Parent Satisfaction Summary

The percent endorsement by parents on their school satisfaction level, as reported in the annual Parent Opinion Survey.

Percent endorsement indicates the percent of positive responses (agree or strongly agree) from parents who responded to the survey.

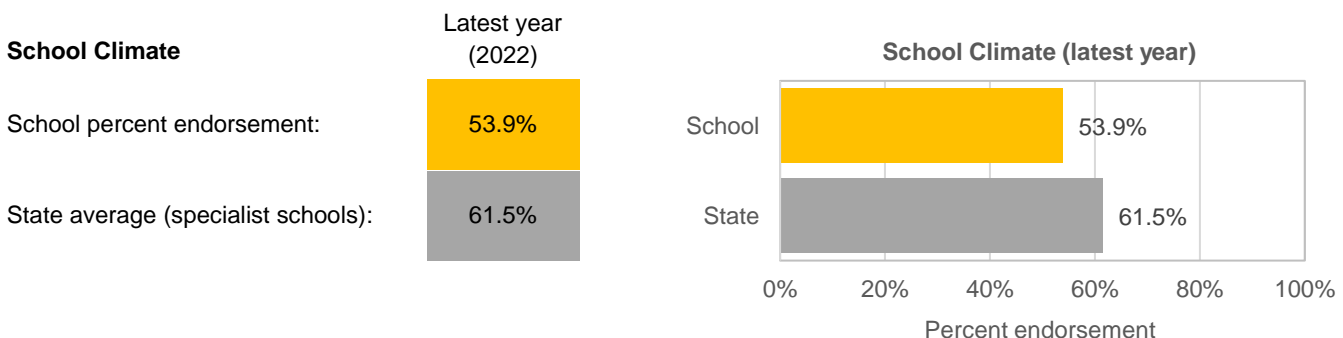


School Staff Survey

The percent endorsement by staff on School Climate, as reported in the annual School Staff Survey.

Percent 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.



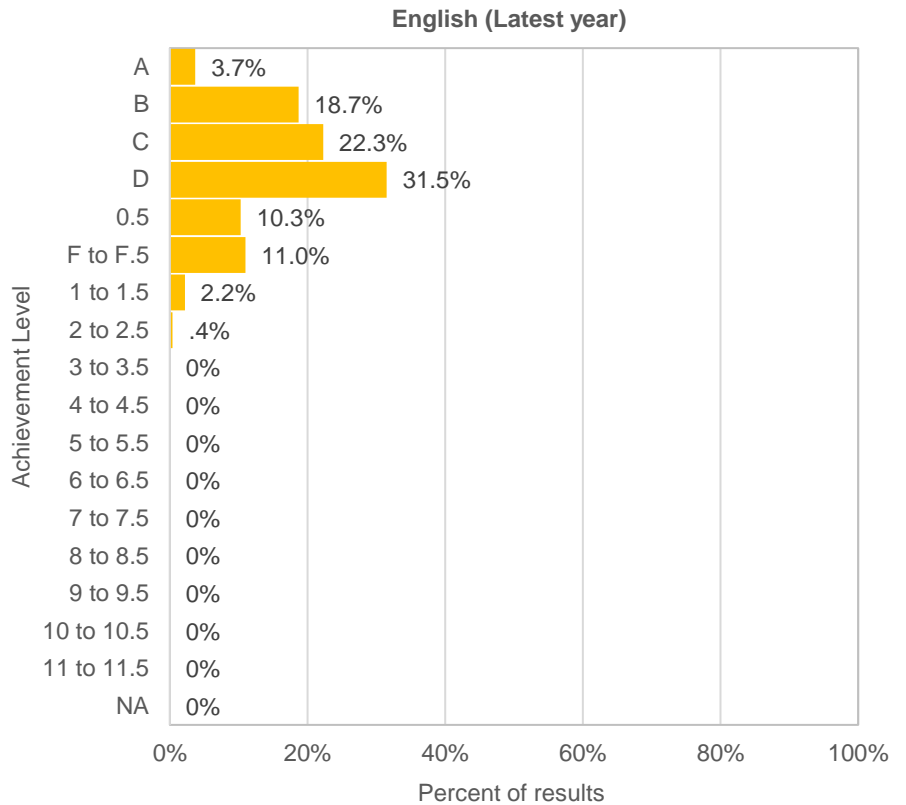
LEARNING

Teacher Judgement of student achievement

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

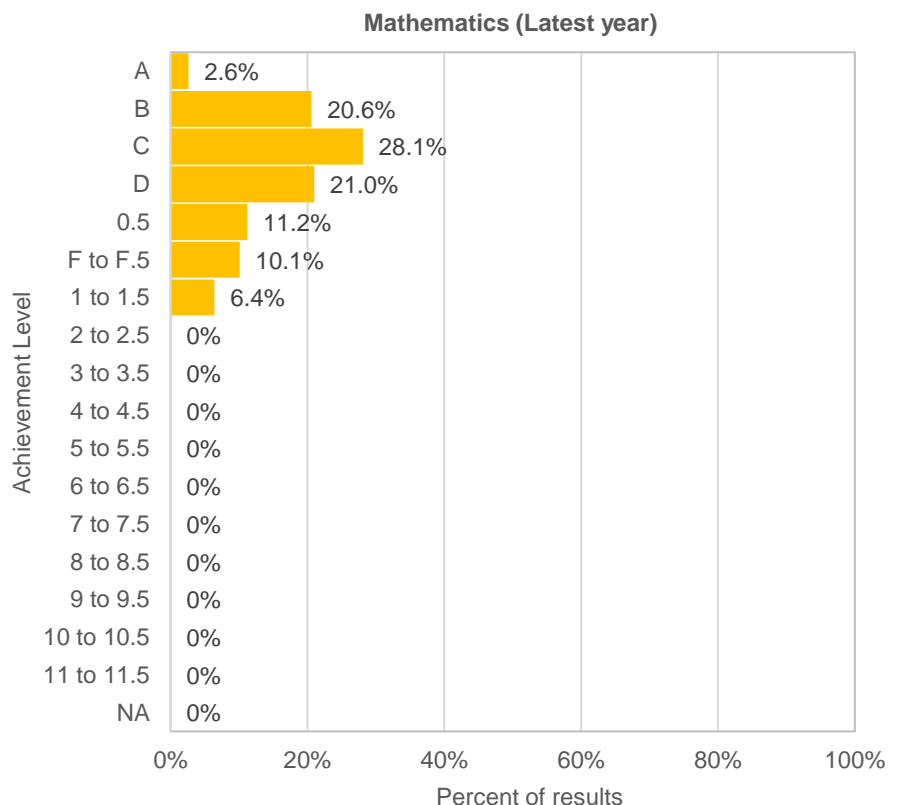
English

Achievement Level	Latest year (2022)
A	3.7%
B	18.7%
C	22.3%
D	31.5%
0.5	10.3%
F to F.5	11.0%
1 to 1.5	2.2%
2 to 2.5	0.4%
3 to 3.5	NDA
4 to 4.5	NDA
5 to 5.5	NDA
6 to 6.5	NDA
7 to 7.5	NDA
8 to 8.5	NDA
9 to 9.5	NDA
10 to 10.5	NDA
11 to 11.5	NDA
NA	NDA



Mathematics

Achievement Level	Latest year (2022)
A	2.6%
B	20.6%
C	28.1%
D	21.0%
0.5	11.2%
F to F.5	10.1%
1 to 1.5	6.4%
2 to 2.5	NDA
3 to 3.5	NDA
4 to 4.5	NDA
5 to 5.5	NDA
6 to 6.5	NDA
7 to 7.5	NDA
8 to 8.5	NDA
9 to 9.5	NDA
10 to 10.5	NDA
11 to 11.5	NDA
NA	NDA



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	2019	2020	2021	2022	4-year average
School average number of absence days:	NDA	NDA	24.9	32.5	28.7

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	2018	2019	2020	2021	4-year average
School percent of students with positive destinations:	NDA	NDA	NDA	100.0%	100.0%

Financial Performance and Position

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE - OPERATING STATEMENT SUMMARY FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 DECEMBER, 2022

Revenue	Actual
Student Resource Package	\$6,011,052
Government Provided DET Grants	\$964,425
Government Grants Commonwealth	\$0
Government Grants State	\$10,000
Revenue Other	\$6,815
Locally Raised Funds	\$5,544
Capital Grants	\$0
Total Operating Revenue	\$6,997,837

Equity ¹	Actual
Equity (Social Disadvantage)	\$23,524
Equity (Catch Up)	\$0
Transition Funding	\$0
Equity (Social Disadvantage – Extraordinary Growth)	\$0
Equity Total	\$23,524

Expenditure	Actual
Student Resource Package ²	\$4,657,260
Adjustments	\$0
Books & Publications	\$5,314
Camps/Excursions/Activities	\$19,774
Communication Costs	\$3,988
Consumables	\$38,904
Miscellaneous Expense ³	\$13,371
Professional Development	\$15,156
Equipment/Maintenance/Hire	\$55,706
Property Services	\$140,574
Salaries & Allowances ⁴	\$0
Support Services	\$717,305
Trading & Fundraising	\$1,246
Motor Vehicle Expenses	\$10,457
Travel & Subsistence	\$246
Utilities	\$43,823
Total Operating Expenditure	\$5,723,125
Net Operating Surplus/-Deficit	\$1,274,712
Asset Acquisitions	\$20,232

- (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 24 Feb 2023 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 2022

Funds available	Actual
High Yield Investment Account	\$318,050
Official Account	\$14,688
Other Accounts	\$0
Total Funds Available	\$332,738

Financial Commitments	Actual
Operating Reserve	\$157,246
Other Recurrent Expenditure	\$0
Provision Accounts	\$0
Funds Received in Advance	\$5,122
School Based Programs	\$0
Beneficiary/Memorial Accounts	\$0
Cooperative Bank Account	\$0
Funds for Committees/Shared Arrangements	\$0
Repayable to the Department	\$0
Asset/Equipment Replacement < 12 months	\$30,000
Capital - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months	\$60,000
Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months	\$60,000
Asset/Equipment Replacement > 12 months	\$0
Capital - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months	\$0
Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months	\$0
Total Financial Commitments	\$312,368

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.