

# 2023 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 \(VIT\)](#)
- the school meets prescribed Minimum Standards for registration as regulated by the Victorian Regulation and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) in accordance with the [Education and Training Reform Act 2006 \(Vic\)](#) (this includes any exemption granted to this school by the VRQA, for the most recent calendar year, in relation to minimum student enrolment numbers and/or the curriculum framework requirement to deliver a languages program)
- the school meets the requirements of the Child Safe Standards as prescribed in [Ministerial Order 1359 – Implementing the Child Safe Standards – Managing the risk of child abuse in schools \(PDF\)](#).

Attested on 01 May 2024 at 01:57 PM by Lauren Topp (Principal)

- This 2023 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 01 May 2024 at 02:55 PM by Melanie Mumford (School Council President)

# How to read the Annual Report

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## 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.

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## 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).

Key terms used in the Performance Summary are defined below:

### NDP and NDA

'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').

## Updates to the '*Performance Summary*' in the 2023 Annual Report

Reporting on the following measures has been updated in the 2023 Annual Report to align with changes to departmental and public reporting products.

### **Parent/Caregiver/Guardian Opinion Survey, School Staff Survey and the Attitudes to School Survey**

The calculation of the percentage endorsement for all survey measures has been revised to no longer include skipped responses. This applies to all survey measures reported in the Performance Summary. The change to the calculation reduces the negative impact of skipped responses on school results, particularly where there were a small number of respondents to the survey.

Additionally, the Parent Satisfaction measure has been revised to use the percentage endorsement of the 'General School Satisfaction' factor of the Parent/Caregiver/Guardian Opinion Survey only. Previously, this measure reflected an average of multiple factors in the survey. The change to reporting a single factor is consistent with how Parent Satisfaction is reported to schools and in other public reports.

# About Our School

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## 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 2023 the enrolment at its maximum was 109 students, 25 female and 84 male. 22 percent of students had English as an additional language. In 2023 the enrolment numbers increased by 14 from 2022. We are predicting growth by another 2 classrooms for 2024 based on the 2023 expressions of interest. The majority of students travel from a wide geographical area and travel to Niddrie by a contract bus service.

The school's SFOE band is low-medium. The school has a total of 47.40 (EFT), comprised of 1 Principal, 1 Assistant Principal, 1 leading teacher, 5 learning specialists, 15.5 EFT Teachers, 21.40 Education Support staff, 1.2 EFT Occupational Therapist, 1.0 Speech Pathologist 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 teachers to 8 children in each classroom, with all classrooms having 3 educators to deliver the programs.

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## 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 89% 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 78% positive response. I feel confident that this school provides a good standard of education for my child 78%. The school celebrates student achievements in all areas 72%

Families have recognised the effectiveness of our teachers motivating and engaging the children in their learning responding 89% 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 2023. This is evident by the high percentage of approval in the parent feedback survey, with an overall school endorsement of 83.3%.

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. The school implemented a Leading teacher for Wellbeing. The 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 83% 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.

Leadership delivered wellbeing professional learning and linked to staff professional learning goals.

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 89%. A focus of wellbeing has also been student engagement with "My child enjoys the learning they do at school" was rated at 89% in 2023.

Respect is one of our founding values, again pivotal to wellbeing, this area is supported strongly by our families opinions; Respect for diversity 83% positive response. "This school treats my child with respect" at 89%. "Teachers at my school model positive behaviour" 94%.

## Engagement

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% My child enjoys the learning they do at school 89%.

Engagement with families during 2023 was given an overall rating of 80% for school communication.

Our school had an average of 32.7 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 families from overseas taking extended trips home to see families after limited travel through COVID.

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.

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## 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 "All Aboard" an eight-week journey on a Pirate ship to different islands representing different emotions.

The whole school enjoyed African Drumming and an interactive music show by "Welcome to Music" in which they participated with their families.

Camp resumed for our Grade 2 and 3 aged students in 2023, with all of the children and educators returning to Caloola House in Port Arlington.

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## Financial performance

In 2023, Niddrie Autistic School had a total operating revenue of \$8,542,772. The operating revenue was comprised of funding from the Student Resource Package (SRP) (\$6,931,674), other DE grants (\$1,585,581), and other locally raised funds (\$25,519). The school received \$24,350 in Equity Funding, which was used to support funding the Wellbeing and Teaching and Learning staff. This

includes leading teachers and learning specialists who focus 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 2023 was \$6,925,095. All funds expended were used to improve the learning outcomes and well-being of our students, including their learning program and environment.

Throughout the year, the school was heavily impacted by the teacher shortage, there were many teacher vacancies for the year. As a result, the school hired casual teachers through the school's local payroll (SLP) and an agency. As a result, the CRT budget was the highest expenditure item, totalling \$759,185 (Agency: \$506,000, SLP: \$253,185).

For continuity and additional support, School Council continued with the contractual arrangement with a third party to provide speech therapy services for the school. The cost of this in 2023 was \$53,221.

The school ended the year with a net surplus of \$1,617,677. This surplus is due to the teacher shortage, and the school not being able to hire teachers to fill all vacancies and the school has residual funds from the de-amalgamation process. The School Council will utilise these funds to continue to hire staff as well as creating fun and engaging learning areas 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  
<https://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 109 students were enrolled at this school in 2023, 25 female and 84 male.

23 percent of students had English as an additional language and NDP 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).

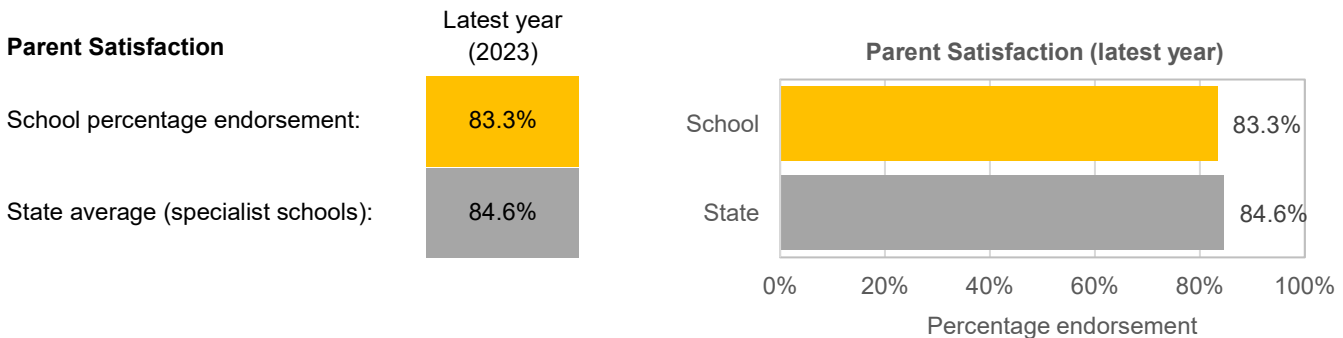
SFOE is a measure of socio-educational disadvantage of a school, based on educational and employment characteristics of the parents/carers of students enrolled at the school. Possible SFOE band values are: Low, Low-Medium, Medium and High. A 'Low' band represents a low level of socio-educational disadvantage,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

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

### Parent Satisfaction Summary

The percentage endorsement by parents on their General School Satisfaction, as reported in the annual Parent/Caregiver/Guardian Opinion Survey.

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

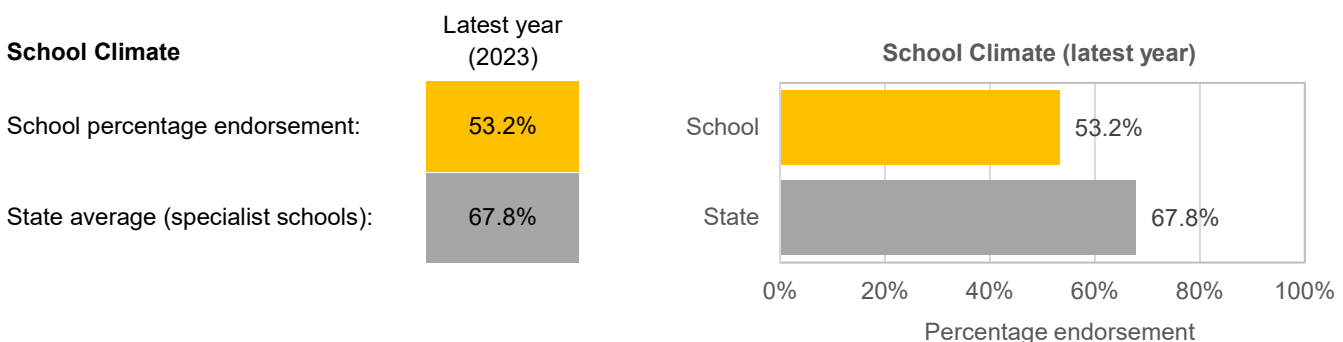


### School Staff Survey

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

Percentage 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.



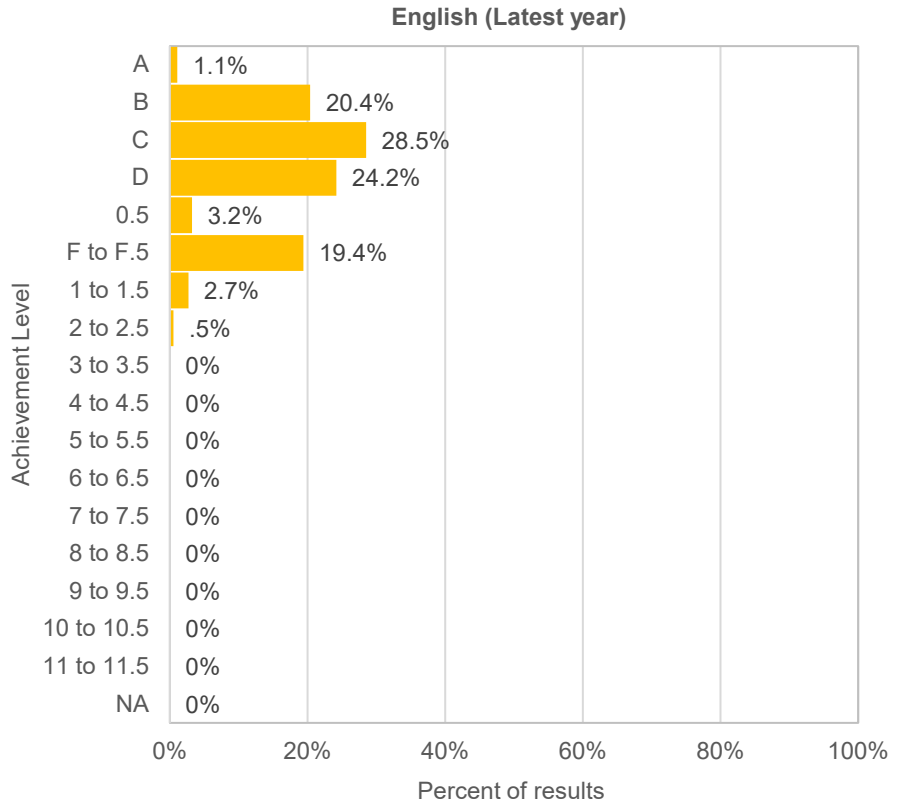
**LEARNING**

**Teacher Judgement of student achievement**

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

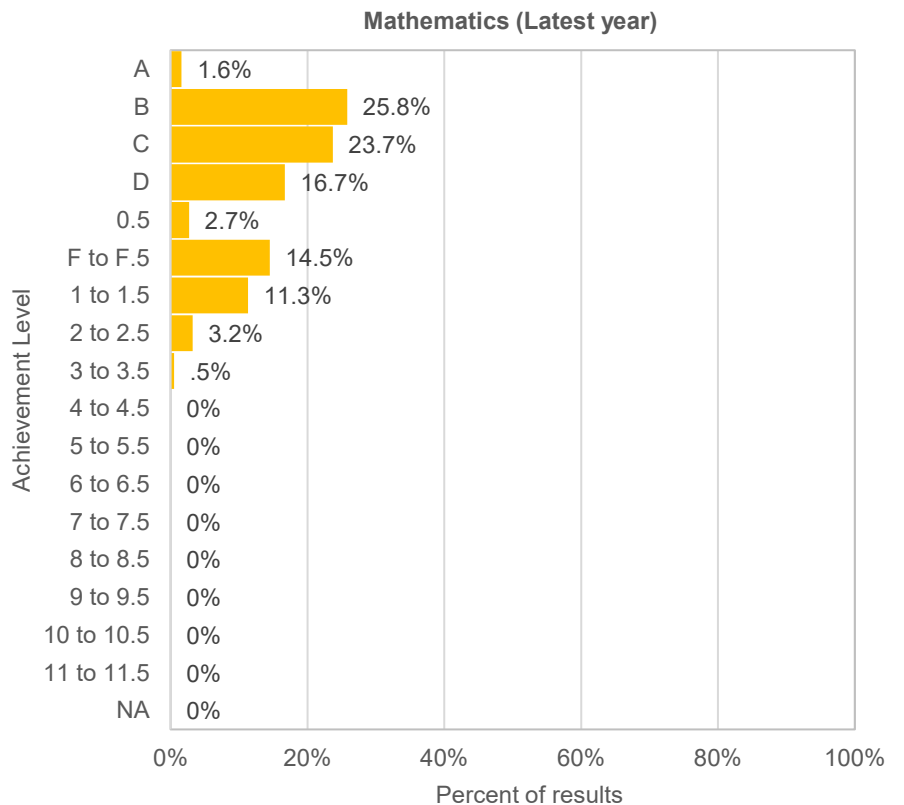
**English**

Achievement Level	Latest year (2023)
A	1.1%
B	20.4%
C	28.5%
D	24.2%
0.5	3.2%
F to F.5	19.4%
1 to 1.5	2.7%
2 to 2.5	0.5%
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 (2023)
A	1.6%
B	25.8%
C	23.7%
D	16.7%
0.5	2.7%
F to F.5	14.5%
1 to 1.5	11.3%
2 to 2.5	3.2%
3 to 3.5	0.5%
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	2020	2021	2022	2023	4-year average
School average number of absence days:	NDA	24.9	32.5	32.7	30.2

### 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	2019	2020	2021	2022	4-year average
School percent of students with positive destinations:	NDA	NDA	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

# Financial Performance and Position

## FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE - OPERATING STATEMENT SUMMARY FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 DECEMBER, 2023

Revenue	Actual
Student Resource Package	\$6,931,674
Government Provided DET Grants	\$1,585,581
Government Grants Commonwealth	\$0
Government Grants State	\$0
Revenue Other	\$20,892
Locally Raised Funds	\$4,624
Capital Grants	\$0
<b>Total Operating Revenue</b>	<b>\$8,542,772</b>

Equity <sup>1</sup>	Actual
Equity (Social Disadvantage)	\$24,350
Equity (Catch Up)	\$0
Transition Funding	\$0
Equity (Social Disadvantage – Extraordinary Growth)	\$0
<b>Equity Total</b>	<b>\$24,350</b>

Expenditure	Actual
Student Resource Package <sup>2</sup>	\$5,337,055
Adjustments	\$0
Books & Publications	\$2,190
Camps/Excursions/Activities	\$22,019
Communication Costs	\$3,638
Consumables	\$48,525
Miscellaneous Expense <sup>3</sup>	\$30,801
Professional Development	\$17,326
Equipment/Maintenance/Hire	\$107,041
Property Services	\$305,834
Salaries & Allowances <sup>4</sup>	\$253,185
Support Services	\$734,453
Trading & Fundraising	\$12,378
Motor Vehicle Expenses	\$12,649
Travel & Subsistence	\$116
Utilities	\$37,886
<b>Total Operating Expenditure</b>	<b>\$6,925,095</b>
<b>Net Operating Surplus/-Deficit</b>	<b>\$1,617,677</b>
<b>Asset Acquisitions</b>	<b>\$89,712</b>

- (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 16 Feb 2024 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 2023

<b>Funds available</b>	<b>Actual</b>
High Yield Investment Account	\$265,024
Official Account	\$40,317
Other Accounts	\$0
<b>Total Funds Available</b>	<b>\$305,341</b>

<b>Financial Commitments</b>	<b>Actual</b>
Operating Reserve	\$218,305
Other Recurrent Expenditure	\$45,543
Provision Accounts	\$0
Funds Received in Advance	\$3,180
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	\$15,000
Capital - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months	\$0
Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months	\$30,000
Asset/Equipment Replacement > 12 months	\$0
Capital - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months	\$0
Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months	\$0
<b>Total Financial Commitments</b>	<b>\$312,028</b>

*All funds received from the Department of Education, 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.*