

2018 Annual Report to The School Community



PRINCIPAL: Damian Duncan

SCHOOL COUNCIL PRESIDENT: Natalie Thompson

ENDORSED BY SC: March 18 2019



WODONGA PRIMARY SCHOOL



Education
and Training

School Context

What is your school's vision, values, and purpose? The school's workforce composition, geographic location, size and structure, social characteristics, enrolment characteristics, and special programs may also be included.

In 2018, Wodonga Primary School commenced its new Strategic Plan where we strived to engage learning and expand the minds of 873 students from our Regional city. Our school is committed to the Visible Learning principles guided by the research of John Hattie. Embedding our work in this area is a high priority and sees our staff constantly reflecting on their methods and pedagogies. As a Visible Learning school, students from Foundation to Year 6 are actively engaged in the core learning areas of English and Maths while exploring the other subject domains via an inquiry based learning model. Student Wellbeing and Engagement are integral aspects of our school environment with consistent language and approaches implemented from F – 6. Specialist teachers in Visual Arts, Music, PE and Japanese not only provide curriculum coverage but also further opportunities for students to choose pathways they are passionate about due to the additional activities provided by our specialists. In 2018, Wodonga PS had 33 classrooms that were structured to enhance collaborative practices within year levels – teachers plan and implement teaching programs that respond to student data and identified areas of need. Reading, Writing and Math curriculum pathways support students to understand their learning progress. Each year level (including our Specialist team) was appointed a Learning Specialist in 2018 based on our SSP goal of Transformation leadership. Our Vision Principles of Culture, Challenge, Curiosity, Community and Collaboration underpin all learning. Strong community connections are evident across our school and local environment. Wodonga Primary School is a proud member of the Wodonga Federation of Government Schools and work tirelessly with the Federation in promoting strong educational pathways in Government schools in Wodonga. In 2018, Wodonga PS had 44 equivalent fulltime teaching staff, 8 Learning Specialist, 4 Principal class and 12 Education Support staff. The school participated in a school review in 2017, one year short of its 4 year time period. 2018's AIP was the first year of implement the new SSP and the major focus areas were improving teacher capacity in Mathematics and developing a transformational leadership model from within.

Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO)

Which FISO improvement initiatives and key improvement strategies did the school focus on in 2018? Note progress and highlights.

The 2018 Annual Implementation Plan for Wodonga PS focused on the following FISO initiatives:

● Building Practice Excellence

The 2018 AIP Goal in Building Teacher capacity in the teaching and learning area of Mathematics, was a major element of work for our school. Throughout the year staff worked on aligning practices in this area and ensuring our instructional model was coherent and evident in all classrooms. We also researched and adopted a new assessment platform for Mathematics, Essential Assessment. These changes in practices was further supported by the introduction of new understandings brought about our school's engagement in the Bastow Leading Mathematics course. Our school shifted our pedagogies to the process of mathematical working, not the product. We focused heavily on the Learning Proficiencies in Mathematics and commenced professional learning around the pivotal instructional practice of "Number Talks". By focusing on this area of the FISO continua our school maintained a constant and consistent approach to building teacher practice excellence the much-needed area of Mathematics.

● Building Leadership Teams

Our school has for many years supported the classroom practitioners from an external angle, meaning professional development support and coaching was externally provided from Principals and Leading teachers. With our new SSP, a major goal was transforming the school's approach to leading change and school improvement from within (the classroom). We appointed eight Learning Specialist to support our school improvement measures by coaching teams of teachers from the classroom level. When teachers are teaching the content and curriculum alongside the team of teachers they are leading, there is a much greater leverage for change and an acute level of knowledge achieved. 2018 saw many challenges in this

change of leadership culture in our school and through these trials many successful outcomes are evident. Coaching is daily/weekly, data is closely monitored and responded to, PDPs are alive and in the hands of colleagues, and there is a culture of collective ownership of our school improvement agenda.

Achievement

How has the school progressed its student **achievement** goals and outcomes over the past year? What are the highlights and proposed future directions and strategies?

Our AIP goal of improving student outcomes in Mathematics by 2.5% was unfortunately not achieved in 2018 (teacher judgment data). Staff worked tirelessly towards assisting students in acquiring new knowledge, concepts and strategies in Mathematics and were hugely disappointed that this goal was not achieved. Year-long professional development saw our staff working on building their capacity to effectively teach mathematics to the students enrolled at WPS. Multiple Staff PLTs in December of 2018 reflected on these outcomes where teachers and leaders considered answers. The following areas are potential reasons for not achieving our desired achievement goal in 2018;

- Increased knowledge of the Mathematics curriculum resulted in staff being more critical of our students' ability to provide evidence against the Victorian Curriculum standards.
- The new assessment tool was introduced during second semester and teachers' knowledge and capacity to utilise this tool to its full capacity did not occur.
- The introduction of our new curriculum maps potentially meant teachers felt confined to blocks of time on curriculum elements for the first time.

With teacher judgements being at the heart of this AIP goal, it's important to consider the 2018 NAPLAN results. Our Year 3 and 5 students achieved outcome levels that were similar to students' outcomes in comparable schools. With our Year 5 cohort demonstrated marginally stronger outcomes than our Year 3 students.

Mathematics will continue to be an ongoing area of development for our School Improvement Team and ultimately, our entire staff. Greater emphasis on the Leading Maths pedagogies will be our focus, as well as the use of our assessment techniques for effective moderation of teacher judgement in Maths.

Engagement

How has the school progressed its student **engagement** goals and outcomes over the past year? What are the highlights and future directions? Include any planned strategies and actions that address student non-attendance.

Wodonga Primary School's motto, "Engage Learning, Expand Minds" is echoed through our communication with staff and community. It is a prominent reminder for our Leadership Team to consider when making important decisions around the future of our school. Ensuring our school has a Positive Climate for Learning is a key focus of one of our Assistant Principals.

Having a team of leaders and staff focusing deeply on our school's climate and its effect on learning and attendance, has ensured our school has similar attendance data as comparable schools. Over a four-year period, our school records show less absences than comparable schools which provides us with feedback that the year-over-year focus on our school climate, is ensuring students are connecting to our school.

Along with our Positive Climate for Learning Principal, the team who monitor student engagement includes: a Primary Welfare Coordinator, a Primary Engagement Coordinator and our Student Administration Education Support staff member. Together, this team monitors and evaluates our attendance records, as well as provides feedback to the Leadership team and the broader school community.

An important initiative introduced in 2018, was our parent alert system for unapproved absences. Through the Compass School Management platform, parents of students with an unapproved absence, are notified by text message at 10am on the day of absence. We commenced this in Term 3 2018. Initial analysis of our unapproved absence data, demonstrates an increase in explanations, communications and approvals. In 2018, we had a 4% approved non-attendance record, while a further 0.5% of student absences was not

approved. We continue to look for ways to encourage families to endeavour to ensure their children don't miss school.

A new school-wide initiative in 2018 was the monthly attendance acknowledgement at our weekly assemblies. Twice a term, we acknowledge a year level with the highest percentage of attendance for that month. As a result, students from this year level, vote and choose their incentive. At the commencement of the year, our student leaders assist year levels to choose five types of activities to put on the "incentive" lists. The students feel they have some agency in their incentive and it is ultimately appropriate to the cohort of students.

In 2019, our school will continue the aforementioned initiatives, as well as collaborate with the Wodonga Network of Schools on its collective focus on reducing student absenteeism.

Wellbeing

How has the school progressed its student **wellbeing** goals and outcomes over the past year? What are the highlights and future directions? Have any particular programs been implemented to support these outcomes?

Student Wellbeing is a vital part of our work at Wodonga Primary School. In 2018, we continued to implement initiatives and programs that ensure students felt safe, cared for, and connected to school. It's imperative to the leadership of Wodonga Primary School, that as a large school, we have a strategic approach that is supportive of all students. These measures are in place to ensure not one child's wellbeing is compromised at school, or supported when environmental factors outside of school, are hindering their success. In 2018 our school continued to ensure a consistent approach and common language to support student development of social and emotional skills. To further the school's consistency, the Tiered Response to Behaviour was implemented to ensure transparency to students, staff and the school community around expected behaviours and strategies redirect and re-engage students. To further complement this, the Positive Climate for Learning Handbook was developed. This handbook is a teacher resource focusing on strategies for developing a classroom climate that promotes inclusion for all.

In 2018, we continued to use Wellbeing data to guide our programming and foci. Student surveys were conducted in Years Foundation to 3 in March and October, to gain individual, cohort and whole school pictures of student wellbeing. Students in Years 4-6 completed the department's mandatory Attitudes to School Survey. This process was also supported by the school's Wellbeing team. The data was then used to celebrate areas of strength as well as identifying areas for foci.

Whole school units were conducted on Resilience and Motivation to collectively develop common understandings and language. An example of small group programs that were introduced in 2018 for specific students based on the data and teacher/parent referral process to support students was the training of our Wellbeing and Engagement coordinators in Rhythm to Recovery program, where students used drums as therapy.

Wodonga Primary also has strong connections with external providers who use our school to conduct counselling, support meetings and professional meetings to support students and families. Our use of a SSSO (School Student Support Officer) provided to us by the DET enabled our leadership team to utilise the expertise of professionals when working with and supporting highly vulnerable students and their families. WPS was also able to engage Junction Support Services to implement their STARS program. This program provided one-on-one counselling sessions for students who were flagged as "at risk" of disengagement. We saw many positive results for the students engaged in this program.

Financial performance and position

Provide a commentary relating to the school's financial performance, including:

- why the annual result was a surplus or deficit
- extraordinary revenue or expenditure items
- sources of funding the school received; for example, equity funding, special grants or fundraising initiatives
- additional State or Commonwealth Government funding the school received beyond the SRP, the purpose of the funding and its link to improvements in teaching and learning

Wodonga Primary School conducted numerous fundraising events throughout the year to raise funds for targeted projects including a Mother's Day Stall, Father's Day Stall, Easter Raffle and a Christmas Raffle. This resulted in profits being utilised to fund the purchase of equipment and resources for students.

Wodonga Primary School had numerous building works occur throughout the year in order to facilitate our growth in student population and the need for additional classrooms. Our population has continued to increase into 2019, which resulted in further expenditure to convert spaces into classrooms to accommodate the 2019 demand.

In 2018 we introduced a STEM specialist learning area. This required the acquisition of substantial ICT equipment and learning resources to establish the program as part of our specialist curriculum.

The Equity program again provided much needed support to our students through many avenues of expenditure. An overall profit was realised as a result of indicative expenditure exceeding actual expenditure. Funds were used for a number of purposes, including expanding our existing playgrounds, providing adequate shade provision for students in the yard, professional development for our staff, replenishing and expanding our existing Numeracy resources and staff training. We had a strong focus on numeracy in 2018 which continues in 2019.

We had a large surplus in our credit budget due to a number of staffing changes, which has been partly utilised in 2019 and will also enable us to further improve our school through the acquisition of large scale priority projects. As a result of our 2018 surplus, we have also opted to hire a School Psychologist and School Counsellor to further provide wellbeing support to our students on a regular basis.

In October 2018, the decision was made to outsource our Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) Service to an external provider. This will impact on future finances, as this program generated generous profits for the school in previous years. Profits from 2018 have been retained in order to complete some capital works to the OSHC space in 2019.