

School Strategic Plan 2025-2029

Merri Creek Primary School (3110)



Submitted for review by Kerri Gibson (School Principal) on 10 June, 2025 at 09:22 AM

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School Strategic Plan - 2025-2029

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School vision	'As a school community, we create an environment where students thrive in every way. We support each other as we discover, learn, think, and question. Respecting ourselves and others, we all contribute to our community and the wider world.'
School values	Merri Creek Primary School values are C.A.R.E. Creativity Within the school community, this reflects: • Valuing ideas from parents, children, staff, and the wider community • Being open to suggestions and ideas • Valuing the creative and aesthetic skills and ideas of all members of the community. Acceptance Within the school community, this reflects: • A commitment to social justice • An acknowledgement of diversity • Respecting differences • Embracing of all cultures • Inclusion of children with additional or special needs. Responsibility Within the school community this reflects: • Being helpful to all members of the community • Reflecting citizenship duty • Being reliable, transparent, and honest • Fulfilling legal and moral requirements • Reflecting individual and group responsibility. Effort Within the school community this reflects: • Aiming to achieve best outcomes for children in relation to academic as well as student wellbeing • Reflecting upon and building a strong future for the school community • Being strong advocates for children, families, and education.

Context challenges

This strategic plan has a focus on developing teacher curriculum knowledge, pedagogy, and the related learning experiences that produce high levels of achievement and growth outcomes for all students. This is best delivered by building teacher capacity to identify and analyse student needs, to set specific and measurable goals for improvement, to choose teaching strategies informed by evidence and research, and to work collaboratively to implement and monitor changes in their classrooms.

The school's NAPLAN results, and school-based assessments indicate significant progress in student achievement over the last strategic period. Students frequently outperformed those in similar schools on NAPLAN, with a high percentage achieving at or above age-expected levels. Additionally, the percentage of students meeting or exceeding age-expected growth in both English and Mathematics has improved, with teacher judgments remaining consistently high. A key challenge, however, lies in the discrepancy between teacher judgments and NAPLAN results for Literacy and Numeracy. While NAPLAN outcomes are strong, teacher assessments tend to be slightly lower than those of similar schools, highlighting a need to enhance teacher capacity in assessment calibration and moderation.

The data shows a well-established learning program from Foundation to Year 3, with few students requiring additional support. Achievement outcomes in Year 3 align with those of similar schools, and teacher judgments at Foundation to Year 3 reflect a robust learning program that sets students up for continued success. By Year 5, NAPLAN results for literacy and numeracy match or exceed those of similar schools. Furthermore, the growth from Year 3 to Year 5 is notably higher in both reading and numeracy compared to similar and network schools. The challenge moving forward is to sustain this strong foundational learning through to Year 3, ensuring a solid, gap-free baseline for all students while simultaneously embedding academic challenge to further extend learning. Continuing the work implemented in the last strategic plan, consolidating these practices and monitoring for impact drives the plan.

Analysis of the FISO 2.0 self-assessment, Student Attitudes to School Survey (AtoSS) data, and stakeholder feedback has identified several key challenges that will inform the next strategic period for engagement and wellbeing. While wellbeing and engagement measures for students in Years 4 to 6 have generally shown improvement, student voice and agency remain underdeveloped. The challenge is to meaningfully increase student voice and agency in learning, so that students are empowered to contribute, lead, and take increasing levels of ownership of their educational experience. Currently, students do not demonstrate a consistent or clear understanding of how to monitor and advance their learning. This lack of clarity can impact engagement, self-efficacy, and the ability to find learning relevant and meaningful. The challenge is to develop teacher understanding of the pedagogies that support voice and agency to ensure students master the skills of self-regulated learning, actively managing and reflecting on their own progress with increasing levels of independence.

Although a common instructional model is in place for curriculum learning, this framework does not yet extend to the

metacognitive, social, and emotional domains. These capabilities are essential for building resilience, independence, and a strong learning disposition in students. The challenge is to embed a consistent, whole-school approach to metacognitive, social and emotional learning, aligned with the school's existing instructional model. Students without opportunities to problem-solve, collaborate, and contribute actively in class are at risk of passive disengagement. While these students may not present behavioural challenges, their lack of connection to learning may reduce achievement and wellbeing outcomes. The challenge is to create classroom environments rich in opportunities for student interaction, collaboration, and authentic learning experiences. A positive and engaging classroom climate not only benefits students but also plays a critical role in teacher efficacy. Strong teacher-student relationships are a key factor influencing teacher performance. Maintaining a positive classroom climate across the school, will support both student engagement and teacher wellbeing.

The school has comprehensive structured leadership roles that ensure clear alignment of responsibilities for school improvement. The school's strong focus on developing transparency around expectations and operations contributes to strong growth and development of teacher capabilities. The strategic allocation of a learning specialist, leading teachers, curriculum committee members and team leaders effectively augment the leadership model, providing additional support for teachers. The leadership team collectively drive effective school-based professional learning. They are accountable for leading school improvement, using their pedagogical knowledge and skills to support staff. Teachers express confidence when approaching leaders and value the collaborative dialogue in understanding the school's strategic direction. Leadership has a commitment to staff wellbeing and professional growth and to fostering a supportive environment where teachers feel comfortable and confident to express their opinions. The distributive leadership model enhances staff voice on key school priorities, assisting the school to effectively align whole-school goals and guide future direction. Provisioning existing middle leaders with opportunities to strengthen their leadership knowledge and skills through school-based support and external leadership training will continue to provide a depth of leadership to effectively accelerate the implementation of school initiatives. Continuing to build capacity to confidently facilitate team discussions and/or lead professional learning will be advantageous.

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) are well established. Consistent structures and protocols are in place and the school prioritises time, aligning schedules for effective operation. PLCs are focused on either a whole school or a team emphasis aligned to priorities. PLCs facilitate data discussions on problems of practice, with established protocols ensuring centralised data access for all staff. Professional learning is provided to build teachers' capacity to undertake a PLC cycle. PLCs highlight the school's deliberate intent to build staff capacity to actively participate in a data driven reflective process. The challenge is to continue to implement PLC's as a data-driven way of working across the school when planning and to deepen knowledge of the continuous learning process.

Intent, rationale and focus	Intent Teaching and learning are constantly evolving, and it is essential for educators to continuously reflect on insights into cognition and learning. By continually exploring how students learn, we can be intentional and consistent in our approach, ensuring students acquire and retain knowledge in the most effective ways and that there is learning equity for all. Leadership is committed to driving progress through an evidence-based design of learning opportunities and progress monitoring. Wellbeing, engagement, and academic learning are interconnected and mutually reinforcing. To foster this, we require a deliberate, coherent, and planned approach to embed wellbeing and engagement into teaching and learning practices using an integrated approach to pedagogy where wellbeing and engagement are seamlessly interwoven into everyday teaching and not treated as separate programs. The implementation of an instructional approach emphasising student voice, agency, leadership, and wellbeing as central elements of the learning design, will allow teachers to progressively transfer the responsibility for learning independence to students while maintaining a critical role in explicitly teaching, guiding and supporting the learning process. This is in effect a 'Gradual Release of Responsibility' model. By fostering learning partnerships, students can be actively involved in elements of planning, goal setting, and assessment, promoting a sense of collective responsibility for learning. The broader intent is for students to feel confident in their abilities, be willing to participate, and challenge themselves in learning. This requires teaching the attitudes and behaviours needed to enhance learning success. Student skills in self-regulation, self-monitoring and self-evaluation, are vital for life-long learning. While a school-wide behaviour management plan is important, building teacher capabilities to proactively create and sustain effective classroom environments is key to students' success in managing their social and emotional worlds. To achieve this, leaders and teachers are required to engage in continuous learning - reflecting on practices, seeking new knowledge, and collaborating to improve outcomes for students Rationale A well-sequenced curriculum is important to ensure that students have the prior knowledge they need to master new knowledge. The curriculum defines the learning journey for students, ensuring they are progressing through expected milestones. Teachers must be proficient with both the content of the curriculum and the pedagogical approaches that support effective delivery. This is best achieved through an instructional model with a coherent framework for the progression of learning and clearly defined teacher pedagogical approaches. This includes making content explicit through carefully designed and paced instruction, thoughtful teacher modelling, and clarifying worked examples to ensure that students are not overwhelmed. Teachers use their curriculum knowledge to plan purposeful learning and differentiate instruction
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that is responsive to what and how students learn and this supports learning diversity, growth and challenge.

A school-wide behaviour management plan is important but not sufficient on its own. To truly support student growth, priority must be placed on building teacher capability to design and implement classroom environments that are safe, inclusive, and conducive to learning for all students. Expectations, behaviours, and interactions of teachers are recognised as key drivers of student outcomes, shaping the conditions for both academic success and personal development. Students need teacher support in developing their social and emotional regulation, equipping them to navigate learning, self, and relationships with increasing independence and resilience.

Student agency is a critical component of this vision. Agency refers to a student's ability to set meaningful goals, reflect on their progress, and take responsible actions to effect positive change in their learning. It involves students taking an active role in shaping their learning experiences and exercising autonomy rather than passively following directions. Promoting student agency leads to more empowered, motivated learners who are invested in their own success. Alongside agency, student leadership is a vital element of whole-school development. Leadership opportunities allow students to build skills in communication, collaboration, and advocacy. Through authentic voice, students are invited to collaborate with staff, participate in decision-making processes, and become more connected to their learning environment. This strengthens student motivation and a sense of belonging for all year levels.

Teacher leadership significantly enhances student learning, strengthens professional collegiality, and drives school improvement by empowering educators to influence teaching practices, foster collaboration, and create a positive learning environment. By promoting a culture of feedback and continuous improvement, teacher leaders help to create a more vibrant and supportive school community.

Ultimately, a unified school culture that aligns wellbeing, engagement, and learning is essential. This integrated vision not only supports academic achievement but also nurtures the holistic development of every student socially, emotionally, and intellectually.

Focus

Consolidation of best practice through implementations centred in evidence-based instructional programs, teaching pedagogies, and data collection practices.

Implementation and refinement of the instructional model ensuring alignment with the Victorian Teaching and Learning Model 2.0 (VTLM 2.0).

Implementation of the Victorian Curriculum 2.0.

Implementation of literacy and numeracy scope and sequences aligned with the Victorian Curriculum 2.0.

Developing teacher expertise with English and Mathematics curriculum content, ensuring differentiation to extend each

	student at their point of need. Developing the integrated curriculum framework to build a sequence of knowledge-based learning embedding the application and assessment of real-world content for literacy and numeracy skills in context. Implementation of consistent progress monitoring, diagnostic and formative assessment practices to analyse data, inform teaching and learning decisions, provide structured feedback to students and monitor teacher effectiveness. Research, design and implementation of a consistent, whole-school approaches to metacognitive, social and emotional learning, aligned with the school's existing instructional model. Establishing whole school Tier 1 strategies for engagement and wellbeing and practical support to develop an effective classroom climate for learning. Review of the school-wide behaviour management plan against current best practice evidence for wellbeing and engagement. Continue to foster a culture of instructional leadership through ongoing opportunities for aspiring leaders and middle leaders. Implementation of structured opportunities for professional practice through feedback mechanisms and an agreed understanding of feedback. Align feedback processes to PLCs to further enhance the links between use of data, planning and classroom practice including peer observations, coaching and mentoring to build maturity of PLCs and monitor impact.
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Goal 1	Improve learning growth for every student in literacy and numeracy
Target 1.1	By 2029, increase the 2024 percentage of Year 3 and 5 students achieving NAPLAN 'exceeding' proficiency: Year 3 • Reading from 40% to 45% • Writing from 12% to 17% • Spelling from 14% to 20% • Grammar and Punctuation from 26% to 30% • Numeracy from 26% to 30% Year 5 • Reading from 53% to 58% • Writing from 23% to 28% • Numeracy from 29% to 34%
Target 1.2	Placeholder target to be confirmed when NAPLAN benchmark growth data available (anticipated 2025) By 2029, increase the percentage of Year 5 students achieving NAPLAN benchmark growth: • Reading from xx% (202x) to xx% • Numeracy at xx% (202x) to xx%

Target 1.3	By 2029, increase the percentage of Year 1 to 6 students assessed as being above expected growth (Teacher Judgement, Victorian Curriculum 2.0, Semester 2 2023 to Semester 2 2024) • Reading from 16% to 22% • Writing from 17% to 22% • *Mathematics from xx% (2026) to xx% *Placeholder target to be confirmed when Maths 2 growth data is available (anticipated 2026)
Target 1.4	By 2029, increase the 2024 percentage positive endorsement on the School Staff Survey (SSS) Teaching and Learning modules: • Use pedagogical model from 89% to 94% • Discuss problems of practice from 80% to 85% • Professional learning through peer observations from 40% to 45% • Understand how to analyse data from 85% to 90%
Target 1.5	By 2029, increase the 2024 percentage positive endorsement for Year 4 to 6 students on the student Attitudes to School Survey (AtoSS). • Stimulated Learning from 77% to 83%
Key Improvement Strategy 1.a The strategic direction and deployment of resources to create and reflect shared goals and values; high expectations; and a positive, safe and orderly learning environment	Refine and enhance a culture of leadership, collaboration and inquiry

Key Improvement Strategy 1.b Documented teaching and learning program based on the Victorian Curriculum and senior secondary pathways, incorporating extra-curricula programs	Enhance and embed staff capability to consistently implement agreed teaching and learning practices.
Key Improvement Strategy 1.c Systematic use of assessment strategies and measurement practices to obtain and provide feedback on student learning growth, attainment and wellbeing capabilities	Build and enhance staff capability to use data and assessment practices to inform teaching and learning, at each student's point of need.
Goal 2	Improve student engagement and wellbeing
Target 2.1	By 2029, increase the 2024 percentage positive endorsement for Year 4 to 6 students on the AtoSS: • Sense of confidence from 79% to 84% • Effective teaching time from 66% to 71% • Effective classroom behaviour from 77% to 82% • School connectedness' from 80% (2024) to 85% • Emotional Awareness and Regulation from 73% to 78%
Target 2.2	By 2029, increase the 2024 percentage positive endorsement on SSS Teaching and Learning modules: • Promote student ownership of learning from 75% to 80% • Seek feedback to improve practice from 79% to 84%

Target 2.3	By 2029, maintain or increase the 2024 percentage positive endorsement on the Parent/Carers/Guardians Opinion Survey (PCGOS) as follows: • Promoting positive behaviour at 92% • Stimulated learning environment from 83% to 88%
Target 2.4	By 2029, reduce the 2024 percentage of Year Foundation to Year 6 students with 20 or more absent days from 29% to 26%
Key Improvement Strategy 2.a Documented teaching and learning program based on the Victorian Curriculum and senior secondary pathways, incorporating extra-curricula programs	Build a shared understanding of student agency in learning and wellbeing
Key Improvement Strategy 2.a Systematic use of assessment strategies and measurement practices to obtain and provide feedback on student learning growth, attainment and wellbeing capabilities	
Key Improvement Strategy 2.a Activation of student voice and agency, including in leadership and learning, to strengthen students' participation and engagement in school	
Key Improvement Strategy 2.b	Continue to enhance the school's processes for supporting inclusion, health and wellbeing

The strategic direction and deployment of resources to create and reflect shared goals and values; high expectations; and a positive, safe and orderly learning environment	
Key Improvement Strategy 2.b Responsive, tiered and contextualised approaches and strong relationships to support student learning, wellbeing and inclusion	
Key Improvement Strategy 2.c The strategic direction and deployment of resources to create and reflect shared goals and values; high expectations; and a positive, safe and orderly learning environment	Continue to strengthen learning partnerships with parents, carers and families
Key Improvement Strategy 2.c Responsive, tiered and contextualised approaches and strong relationships to support student learning, wellbeing and inclusion	