

2024 Annual Report to the School Community

School Name: Emerson School (4918)



- 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 04 April 2025 at 02:15 PM by John Mooney (Principal)

- As executive officer of the school council, I attest that this 2024 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 04 April 2025 at 02:15 PM by John Mooney (Principal)

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).

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').

About Our School

School context

Emerson School is a specialist educational facility dedicated to addressing the distinct learning needs of students with mild intellectual disabilities, ranging from ages 5 to 18. Located in Dandenong, our school serves the surrounding communities, including Lyndhurst to the south, Mulgrave/Springvale to the west, Pakenham to the east, and Rowville/Lysterfield to the north. The Department of Education offers dedicated school bus services for approximately 53% of our students within the designated transit zone. The remaining 47% of students are either transported by family members or caregivers or use public transportation.

Our staffing extends across two campuses and comprises:

- **4 Principal Class Officers**
- **9 Leading Teachers**
- **50 Teachers**
- **42 Education Support Staff**
- **5 Administrative Staff**
- **3 Speech Pathologists**
- **1 Occupational Therapist**
- **1 Mental Health Practitioner**
- **1 Social Worker**

At Emerson School, we unlock the growth and potential of each student. We foster a constructive atmosphere where relationships, recognition, constructive feedback, and encouragement forms the cornerstone of our educational approach. The collaboration among teachers, parents or guardians, peers, and families is the essential ingredient of this nurturing environment.

The present student cohort consists of **360** students, arranged into three distinct groups as outlined below:

- **104 students in Junior School**
- **118 students in Middle School**
- **138 students in Senior School**

Among our students, 3% identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, while 19 % of students have a first language that is not English. We remain dedicated to ensuring that all of our students receive an inclusive and empowering educational experience.

Progress towards strategic goals, student outcomes and student engagement

Learning

At Emerson School, we implement the Victorian Pathways Certificate (VPC) for our Senior school students, while our Junior and Middle school cohorts follow the Victorian Curriculum. Our comprehensive curriculum is carefully designed to address the specific needs of each student. We are committed to promoting student achievement through a curriculum that facilitates the attainment of individual goals, as specified in their Individual Education Plans (IEPs). These IEPs reflect the enriching academic environment at Emerson School, where students consistently surpass the learning targets established in their IEPs. Additionally, we continue to employ our tutoring program to support students who were unable to meet their educational objectives in the previous year.

Emerson School exceeded the state average for special education schools in the 2024 Parent Opinion Survey, achieving an overall parent satisfaction endorsement of 98% in the category of School Ethos and Environment – General School Satisfaction. This figure stands in contrast to an 86% endorsement from comparable schools and an 85% average across the state.

In addition, the results from the 2024 Staff Opinion Survey indicate that our staff response under School Ethos and Environment indicated an impressive overall approval rating of 93%. This figure surpasses the state average of 87% and the 86% rating of comparable schools. Such statistics reflect our dedication to excellence and highlight the beneficial influence of our educational environment on the Emerson School community.

Wellbeing

Over the past year, Emerson School has remained committed to creating an environment that emphasised the wellbeing of our students. Our holistic strategy includes seamless transition processes, efficient student induction, the establishment of positive pathways, the School-Based Apprenticeship and Traineeship (SBAT) program, and the Respectful Relationships program. This report evaluates our initiatives, their execution, and the favourable results observed within our school community.

At Emerson School, we have enhanced our transition protocols to provide a seamless and nurturing experience for students. These initiatives have notably alleviated anxiety and increased students' preparedness to begin their educational journey.

Establishing constructive pathways for students is fundamental to our educational approach. We provide a wide array of academic and extracurricular options, tailored to align with the distinct interests and abilities of each student. The School-Based Apprenticeship and Traineeship (SBAT) program remains a pivotal element of our vocational pathways framework. This initiative enables students to integrate classroom learning with hands-on work experience, facilitating a smooth transition from education to employment. Our partnerships with local industries ensure that students acquire pertinent skills and knowledge, thereby improving their employability. The

success stories of our SBAT participants serve as evidence of the program's efficacy in equipping students for rewarding careers.

The 2024 School Performance Report presented an excellent evaluation, achieving a 'High' rating in the wellbeing category in the Attitudes to School Survey. This report indicates a 90% positive endorsement in the 'Stimulated Learning (Special)' area, reflecting a 7% increase from the previous year and significantly surpassing the 76% score of comparable schools.

The Respectful Relationships program plays a crucial role in fostering a safe and inclusive atmosphere within our schools. This year, we have broadened the scope of the program to incorporate activities aimed at enhancing empathy, understanding consent, and nurturing healthy relationships. Our dedication to this initiative has resulted in a significant reduction in incidents and an overall enhancement in student interactions.

Engagement

Emerson School is committed to creating an environment that promotes the achievement of essential life skills necessary for student achievement. A constructive learning atmosphere is characterised by the appreciation of praise, constructive criticism, and motivation. We take pride in offering a nurturing and celebratory environment for all students and their families. We diligently monitor student attendance, ensuring that any unexplained absences are addressed without delay. Our Wellbeing and Engagement Officers, in collaboration with the leadership team, maintain regular communication with students who have a history of frequent absences. A consistent and compassionate approach is essential to tackle the various factors contributing to absenteeism. In cases of extended absences, we convene a Care Team meeting, involving all relevant stakeholders to identify and resolve the underlying issues.

The average number of absence days in 2024 has seen a slight rise to 37.0 days, compared to 36.6 days in the prior year. The creation of the Attendance, Wellbeing, and Remote Learning Unit, which features a staff member specifically assigned to online learning, plays a crucial role in tracking absences. This position is vital for assisting students who are disengaged or unable to participate in in-person classes.

Other highlights from the school year

The second phase of the Emerson School modernisation project has led to the development of an extensive P – 12 Technology Building, which is approaching completion. This new facility will enhance the Wood Technology and Automotive Studies programs we offer, reinforcing our reputation as a leader in educational advancement in the region.

Considerable modifications have been implemented in the Junior School, resulting in notable enhancements, including the establishment of a new playground area for students. Additionally, a tennis court and a basketball court have been added to the recreational facilities to further benefit our students.

Financial performance

The culture of Emerson School revolves around the development of outstanding learning options for our Primary and Secondary students. Our School Council has a strong focus on the attraction of quality staff, a broad range of learning programs that are supported by extraordinary resources and the continued development of top-quality facilities.

In 2024, our school contributed \$3.8 million to the construction of our new Technology Centre that will cost \$6.1 million that will be completed in May 2025. The school is also fully responsible for the provision of non-fixed equipment in the Technology Centre.

A brand-new playground complex was also completed to replace the two playgrounds that were demolished to make way for Stage 1 and 2 of our Building Modernization Program.

We are setting our sights on the construction of Stages 3 & 4 over the next five years.

Congratulations to all students and staff who have worked together in our new and old buildings. You have made 2024 become one of our most successful years.

**For more detailed information regarding our school please visit our website at
<https://www.emersonsc.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

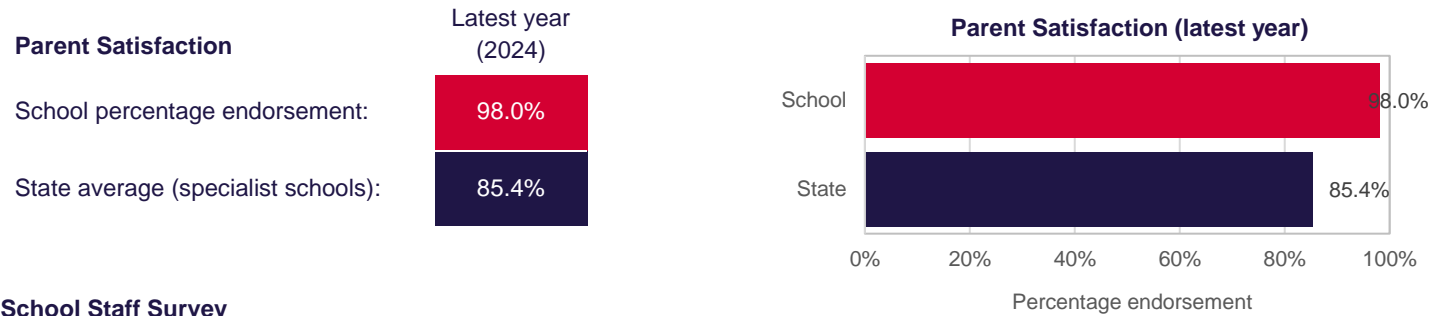
A total of 362 students were enrolled at this school in 2024, 110 female and 252 male.
40 percent of students had English as an additional language and 3 percent were Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

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: **High**

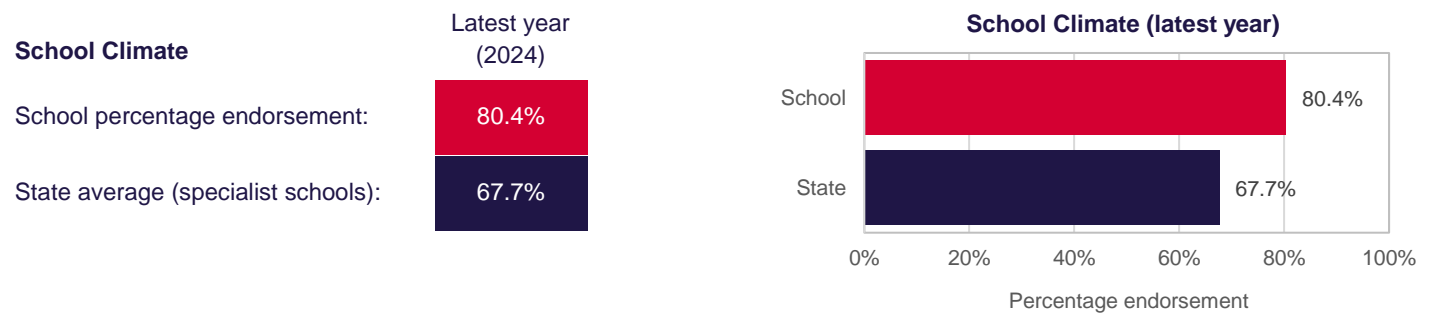
Parent Satisfaction Summary

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.



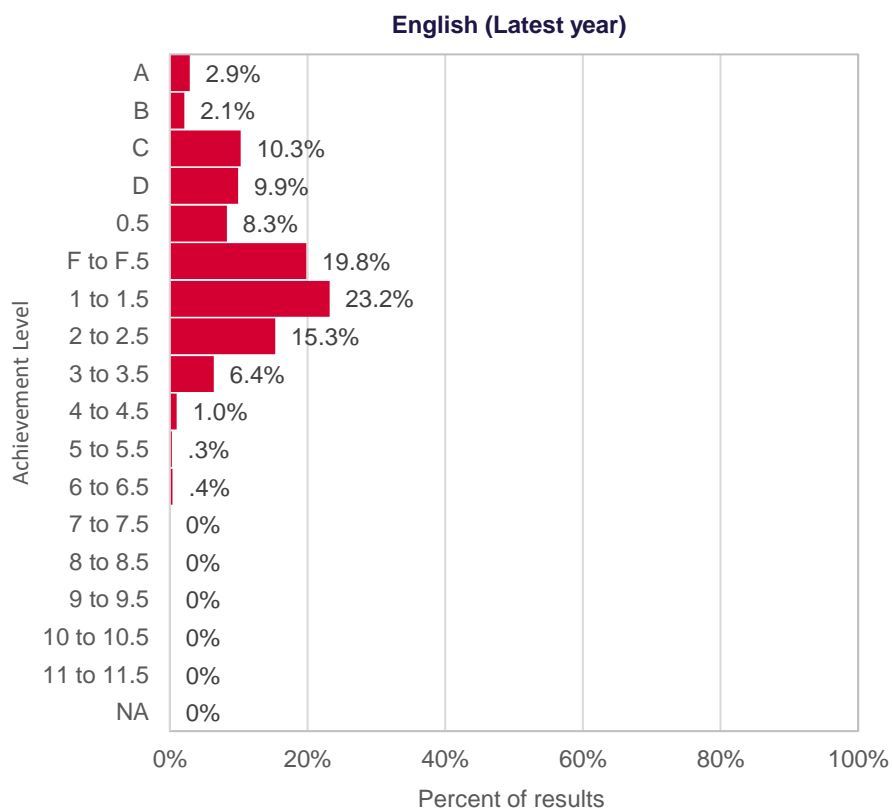
LEARNING

Teacher Judgement of student achievement

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

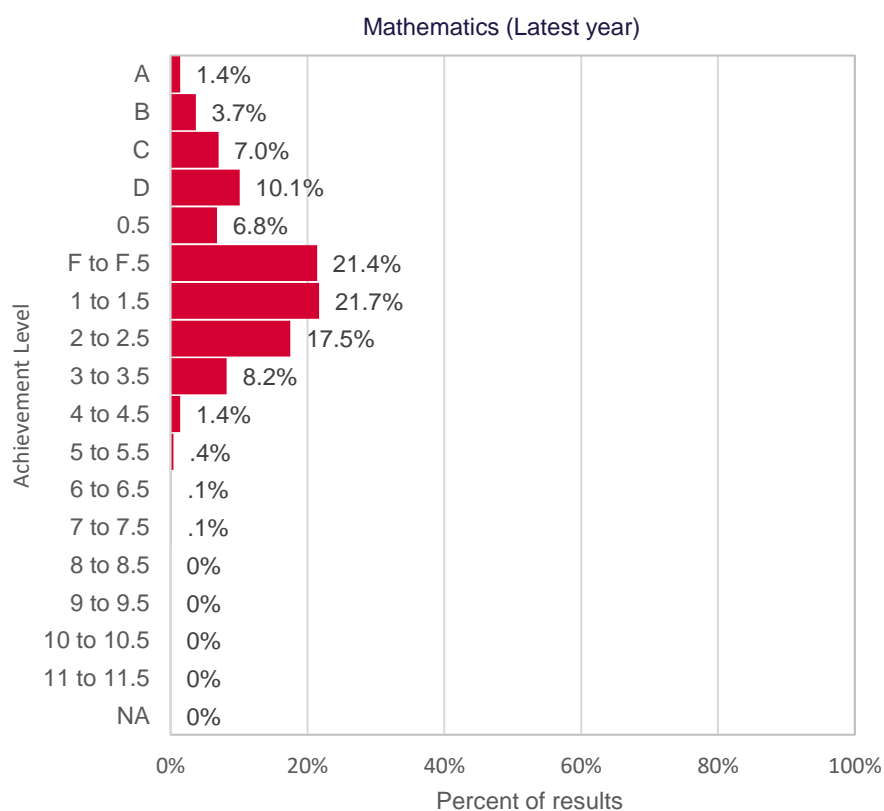
English

Achievement Level	Latest year (2024)
A	2.9%
B	2.1%
C	10.3%
D	9.9%
0.5	8.3%
F to F.5	19.8%
1 to 1.5	23.2%
2 to 2.5	15.3%
3 to 3.5	6.4%
4 to 4.5	1.0%
5 to 5.5	0.3%
6 to 6.5	0.4%
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 (2024)
A	1.4%
B	3.7%
C	7.0%
D	10.1%
0.5	6.8%
F to F.5	21.4%
1 to 1.5	21.7%
2 to 2.5	17.5%
3 to 3.5	8.2%
4 to 4.5	1.4%
5 to 5.5	0.4%
6 to 6.5	0.1%
7 to 7.5	0.1%
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	2021	2022	2023	2024	4-year average
School average number of absence days:	20.8	17.9	27.3	29.1	23.8

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	2021	2022	2023	2024	4-year average
School percent of students with positive destinations:	91.7%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	95.0%



Financial Performance and Position

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE - OPERATING STATEMENT SUMMARY FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 DECEMBER 2024

Revenue	Actual
Student Resource Package	\$13,457,372
Government Provided DET Grants	\$6,067,141
Government Grants Commonwealth	\$35,067
Government Grants State	\$9,800
Revenue Other	\$126,333
Locally Raised Funds	\$106,669
Capital Grants	\$0
Total Operating Revenue	\$19,802,382

Equity ¹	Actual
Equity (Social Disadvantage)	\$437,462
Equity (Catch Up)	\$0
Equity (Social Disadvantage – Extraordinary Growth)	\$0
Equity Total	\$437,462

Expenditure	Actual
Student Resource Package ²	\$12,108,526
Adjustments	\$0
Books & Publications	\$284
Camps/Excursions/Activities	\$138,766
Communication Costs	\$20,519
Consumables	\$196,148
Miscellaneous Expense ³	\$3,842,969
Professional Development	\$42,041
Equipment/Maintenance/Hire	\$284,280
Property Services	\$488,141
Salaries & Allowances ⁴	\$0
Support Services	\$415,432
Trading & Fundraising	\$46,173
Motor Vehicle Expenses	\$41,554
Travel & Subsistence	\$8,247
Utilities	\$94,788
Total Operating Expenditure	\$17,727,868
Net Operating Surplus/-Deficit	\$2,074,514
Asset Acquisitions	\$452,964

- (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 2025 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 2024

Funds available	Actual
High Yield Investment Account	\$2,241,684
Official Account	\$90,074
Other Accounts	\$0
Total Funds Available	\$2,331,758

Financial Commitments	Actual
Operating Reserve	\$937,390
Other Recurrent Expenditure	\$0
Provision Accounts	\$0
Funds Received in Advance	\$200,000
School Based Programs	\$0
Beneficiary/Memorial Accounts	\$702,700
Cooperative Bank Account	\$0
Funds for Committees/Shared Arrangements	\$0
Repayable to the Department	\$0
Asset/Equipment Replacement < 12 months	\$200,000
Capital - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months	\$600,000
Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months	\$0
Asset/Equipment Replacement > 12 months	\$0
Capital - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months	\$0
Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months	\$0
Total Financial Commitments	\$2,640,090

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.