



MERRIWA
PRIMARY SCHOOLS

MERRIWA EDUCATION SUPPORT CENTRE

Independent Public School

'Learning for Life'



2021 ANNUAL REPORT



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SCHOOL BOARD REPORT

2021 continues to see many challenges and unforeseen changes due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Both Merriwa Primary School (MPS) and Merriwa Education Support Centre (MESC) have continued to work together to minimise the upheaval and impact of these changes on our school communities. The Merriwa campus implemented a wide range of initiatives to build resilience in our young people, with on-going focus on support structures to minimise the negative impacts on their wellbeing.

While operations on campus were altered, the staff worked tirelessly to provide a safe, responsive and caring environment for our children and their families, for which they need to be highly commended. This is reflected in the positive results achieved in our NAPLAN results in the Primary School. Through consistency in whole school programs, incredible leadership and targeted interventions students on the Merriwa campus have thrived.

The Board has undergone some recent membership changes. I would like to extend my deep gratitude for the contributions of our outgoing members and offer a warm welcome to our new members. The shared vision of the Board continues to strengthen the campus' capacity to meet the needs of its students and surrounding communities while supporting our Principals, teaching and support staff in providing an inclusive, child-centred learning environment.

We continue to focus on improvement, engaging productively within our communities by increasing partnerships with key community organisations and focusing on inclusion for all communities within the school. This holistic approach focusses on personal achievement, positive mental health strategies and goal setting for our students both academically and socially. The patience, understanding and fundamental care that the staff provide encourages students to reach their potential and strive for excellence.

The leadership of the principals is fundamental to the direction of the Merriwa Campus and has been integral to the successes and future direction of the campus based on mutual trust and respect.

Caroline Bishop
Board Chair

SCHOOL BOARD ENDORSEMENT



Principal
Karen Macri



Board Chair
Caroline Bishop



PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

The Merriwa ESC community continued to manage the uncertainty of the pandemic throughout 2021. The community united to ensure our students and families remained safe while accessing learning as best we could. Students adapted to this new normal and hygiene practices became part of their usual routine. The students continued to develop their skills in independence and confidence, to arrive at their classroom with minimal supervision. I thank all of our families for your continued support of our school.

The Education Support Centre curriculum has a strong focus in emergent literacy, numeracy and communication skills, while building independence and self-management skills for all students. The students' individual needs are a major consideration in all programs. Specialist classroom teachers manage the learning programs and planning for the individual is integral to the success of students with special learning needs. We are proud of our reputation in offering a diverse range of programs including Fundamental Movement Skills, Movement and Music, Sensory Learning, School Readiness, Life Skills, Protective Behaviours, Recreation and Community Access programs. Several ESC students benefit from the specialist subject teachers in the primary school who provide instruction in Science and Physical Education, promoting our philosophy of collaboration and integration.

We continue to focus on providing meaningful programs and on building our resources, to ensure the excellent education for students with specific and additional learning needs. The whole school approach to teaching numeracy and literacy continues to have remarkable success and provides much needed confidence in our students. The staff ensure consistent practices in developing Communication, Sensory programs and in developing independence in each child.

Building upon Merriwa ESC's reputation as a great facility for students with special needs has been our focus. Student success, as confirmed by achievement of individual outcomes, is due to the hardworking teams who ensured that all students are engaged in authentic and purposeful educational programs. ESC staff are actively engaged in training and mentoring to develop teaching skills in the areas of early literacy and numeracy learning. Explicit and intentional teaching methods have again proved beneficial and ensured student achievement against their individual programs. Merriwa ESC has professional staff that work in collaboration with various therapists to ensure success for all students. We expect high standards in learning and behaviour and design programs to enable all children to achieve according to their capability.

Staff continue to be engaged in rigorous self-reflection practices to review our programs, policies and whole school plans to maintain best practice and a consistent approach to teaching. Staff are able to supply various forms of evidence to support our claims that we are meeting our expectations at High to Outstanding levels.

The ESC has a substantial number of students in the junior grades and has a significant focus on meeting sensory needs and learning through activity based tasks, as outlined in the Early Years Learning Framework. We embrace the facilitation of various communication methods in order to provide all students with a voice. Our focus on communication will continue to grow in the coming years. Students have the opportunity to participate in appropriate learning groups created across the Centre and build on their social skills. There is a greater sense of belonging and an increased opportunity to form friendship groups and buddy sessions between classes.

Due to the increase in enrolments in the early childhood years, the ESC has been successful in our request for additional classrooms. In 2021 the installation of an Early Childhood classroom was well received and we look forward to another classroom being installed, along with toilet facilities in 2022.

As always, I extend my heartfelt thanks to my dedicated staff for their outstanding efforts and to our parents and students whose positive contribution ensures that our Centre is such a vibrant place of community learning.

Mrs Karen Macri



WHAT WE STAND FOR

School Ethos:

Merriwa Education Support Centre provides purposeful and relevant learning programs through high quality instruction and evidenced based pedagogy in order to support each individual towards meaningful participation in the community. An outcomes focussed curriculum is provided in a supportive, secure, stimulating, inclusive and positive learning environment to enable the development of academic, social, creative and physical skills, while fostering independence in each child. Holistic approaches to learning are promoted through partnerships with parents, carers, therapists and the school community to assist students to develop to their potential.

Our Vision:

Learning for Life.

Our Purpose:

To prepare young minds for future challenges by teaching skills for lifelong learning.

Our Values:

Learning:

We have a positive approach to learning and encourage it in others; we advance students' learning based on the belief that all students have the capacity to learn.

Excellence:

We have high expectations of our students and ourselves. We set standards of excellence and strive to achieve them.

Equity:

We recognise the differing circumstances of students and are dedicated to achieving the best possible outcomes for all.

Care:

We treat all individuals with care. Our relationships are based on trust, mutual respect and the acceptance of responsibility.

Our Beliefs About Teaching and Learning:

- High expectations are needed to allow all students to reach their potential.
- A safe, stimulating learning environment supports learning.
- Instructional Leadership is imperative in a whole school approach to teaching and learning. Students learn in a variety of ways and learning programs need to reflect this.
- Learning happens best when student-teacher relationships are based on mutual trust and respect.
- Parents and community are actively involved with students' learning.

Our commitment is to:

- Make every student a successful student
- Have sound teaching in every classroom
- Ensure Merriwa ESC is an effective school
- Deliver meaningful accountability
- Build public confidence in our school
- Provide practical support for our teachers and support staff

Our Expectations:

I achieve.....doing my personal best
I am friendly.....treating others with respect and care
I am positive.....facing challenges and showing resilience
I am respectful.....caring for myself, others, the community and the environment

OUR STUDENTS

Enrolments

Our enrolment numbers increased steadily over the year, from 56 in February to 63 in December. Students with a diverse range of disabilities and special learning needs from Kindergarten to Year 6 access the ESC. Our cohort includes students with Intellectual Disability, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Cerebral Palsy, Vision Impairment and various medical needs. Students are eligible to enrol at Merriwa ESC when diagnosed with a disability or when significant teaching and learning adjustments are required due to a learning disorder which impacts on their success in a local primary school setting.

Combined with the student cohort of our partner Primary School, the cultural and ethnic mix at Merriwa contributes to our inclusive and welcoming environment.

Student Numbers (as at 2021 Semester 2)

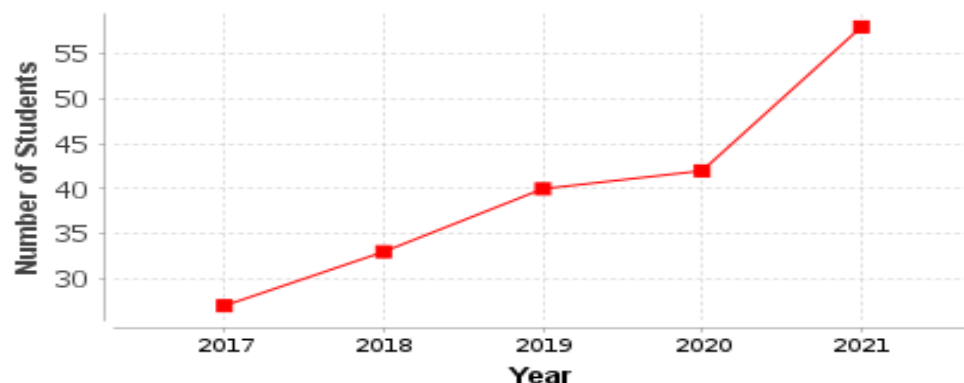
Primary	Kin	PPR	Y01	Y02	Y03	Y04	Y05	Y06	Total
Full Time	(5)	13	6	17	7	6	5	4	63
Part Time	10								

Note: The Kin Full Time student figure represents the Full Time Equivalent of the Part Time students

	Kin	PPR	Pri	Sec	Total
Male	8	12	37		57
Female	2	1	8		11
Total	10	13	45		68

	Kin	PPR	Pri	Sec	Total
Aboriginal		1	3		4
Non-Aboriginal	10	12	42		64
Total	10	13	45		68

Semester 2 Student Numbers



Note: Kindy numbers are not included in this graph

Attendance

The 2021 attendance rates are not available for publication as they were adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and are not comparable to previous years.

Student numbers have steadily increased and attendance rates are also impacted due to the ongoing therapy and medical needs of students whose condition determines their ability to attend regularly.



OUR STAFF

Qualifications

All teaching staff meet the professional requirements to teach in Western Australian public schools and are registered with the Teachers Registration Board. In addition, and in accordance with Department of Education requirements, all staff have Working with Children Checks and National Police Clearance.

Teaching staff have experience with working in an Education Support Setting. Graduate teachers are supported with a mentor and encouraged to attend graduate modules throughout the year.

Education Assistants are qualified with Special Needs certificates and are provided with additional training as identified. There has been an intentional focus on recruiting and retaining high quality, skilled teaching and support staff.

Staff Numbers

	No	FTE	AB/L
Administration Staff			
Principal	1	1.0	0
Deputy Principal	1	0.8	0
Total Administration Staff	2	1.8	0
Teaching Staff			
Teachers	14	10.8	0
Total Teaching Staff	14	10.8	0
School Support Staff			
Clerical / Administrative	2	1.6	0
Other Non-Teaching Staff	28	27.8	0
Total School Support Staff	30	29.4	0
Total	46	42.0	0

Professional Learning

Staff at Merriwa Education Support Centre are encouraged and supported to engage in collaborative practices to build the capacity of their colleagues.

- All staff have participated in ongoing, relevant performance management processes and required professional learning to address weaknesses in performance.
- Staff meetings, Collaborative workshops and Professional Development days focus on student improvement and teacher development.
- Professional Learning opportunities relate to improving curriculum knowledge, self-development, increasing knowledge and understanding of disabilities and medical management procedures, pedagogy development and school targets, and are guided by performance management.
- Staff have embraced improved reflection on performance using a collaborative approach, sharing expertise and participating in peer observation.

Workforce Planning

The majority of staff at MESC are permanently employed to the Department of Education, having been appointed through the public service recruitment process. With increasing enrolments and movement of staff through transfer, extended leave, or maternity leave, it is necessary to recruit new teachers and education assistants each year. In 2021 various merit selection processes were completed to appoint staff to vacated and new positions and to establish an additional classroom in 2022, to accommodate the increase in student numbers. Lead Education Assistants were also appointed to facilitate mentoring and training programs for newly appointed EA staff.



PARENTS AND CITIZENS ASSOCIATION

Merriwa Education Support Centre and Merriwa Primary School have a shared P&C. It was unfortunate that the P&C was not active in Semester 1 of 2021 due to the restrictions and circumstances around the Covid-19 pandemic.

The primary role of the P & C is fundraising to support all students and their families. The P & C traditionally raises approximately \$ 10,000 annually. This significant financial contribution has funded various projects around the school such as the additional shade sail structures, picnic tables for senior students and audio visual equipment for the assembly area. In 2021, no major projects were funded however financial contributions were provided to the school for the purchase of all annual Award Book Prizes and Graduation Awards, as well as the Graduation cake for our Year 6 students.

Our school appreciates the efforts of our small group of P&C volunteers and extend our thanks for their contribution to the Merriwa campus. We look forward to recruiting new members in 2022 and sincerely hope we can rebuild their capacity and have a productive year.



SCHOOL SPECIALIST PROGRAMS

Integration and Inclusivity

Several ESC students benefit from instruction provided by Merriwa Primary School specialist teachers in Science and Physical Education promoting our philosophy of collaboration and integration. Opportunities to provide support for mainstream and ESC students were identified throughout the year. PS students were able to benefit from smaller, specialised ESC classes where appropriate, and ESC students were successfully integrated with their peers in the primary school. These reciprocal programs and mutually beneficial for ESC students and their mainstream peers.

School Readiness Program

This initiative was identified as an area of need within our community to support families with newly diagnosed children to have support in preparing their child for formal schooling. The Readiness Program has provided an opportunity for families to become familiar with the school environment, structures and routines. Parents and Carers participated with their child in purposeful, structured activities while learning through play. As a group, we enjoyed meeting families, sharing information and celebrating the children's successes together. We look forward to providing this program each year.



SCHOOL INITIATIVES AND STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Sensory Program

Considerable planning to create sensory spaces in the ESC covered outdoor learning area, and indoors within dedicated classrooms, provided areas for sensory activity. Ground markings to engage students in play based learning, swings, trampolines and wall hangings are available to all students as an alternative learning environment. Students with Autism have found these spaces to be particularly engaging.

In 2016 the sensory program was established to provide much needed strategies to assist children to regulate their sensory needs. The purpose of the program is to help manage and create desired behaviours in a supportive, safe environment which promotes progress and independence. Individual programs are customised to maximise student success. It has been extremely rewarding to see the improvement in student's ability to control behaviour, emotions and energy states. Our Sensory Program has proven to be an invaluable addition to MESC.

Augmentative Alternative Communication

Merriwa ESC provides Augmentative, Alternative Communication (AAC) for students who have difficulty accessing conventional communication techniques. Pragmatic Organisation Dynamic Display (PODD) books, communication boards and high tech devices continue to be used to support language and communication across the school. This initiative provides students and staff with a successful means to communicate and continues to be a priority area of need.

Staff work collaboratively with therapy providers to investigate tools and techniques that will enable students with complex communication needs access to a variety of strategies, such as: gestures, signing, symbols, pictures, communication aids and computers to improve the ability to communicate their needs and wants. A consistent approach to embed AAC across all curriculum areas is expected and supported.



Community Access and Recreation Programs

A strong emphasis is placed on teaching social competencies and developing skills required to attend the recreation and community access programs. Community access and cooking is the basis of our Life Skills program for many students. They are actively involved in various visits within the local community and are taught to use public transport utilising SmartRider cards and to access public facilities in a safe and semi-independent manner. Students enjoyed regular trips to shopping centres and to the local library. It is encouraging to witness improvements in confidence, consideration of others and their awareness of personal safety develop. Special thanks go to our local IGA, Ocean Keys and Lakeside Shopping Centres for their continued support of our school.

Fundamental Movement Skill Development

The Fundamental Movement Skills program strives to enhance each child's balance, coordination, strength, confidence and independence. Classes participated in repetitive physical activities involving balance, motor planning and motor sequence. Students enjoyed using a range of equipment and taking part in both individual and group activities. Rules on how to interact and negotiate in games are intentionally taught. The students have improved their overall gross motor skills while having fun.

Music and Movement

A music and movement program was successfully introduced for all students in 2018. The program facilitates interactive play using body percussion, rhythm, dance, singing and experiencing sounds using musical instruments. It seems that music and movement supports creative learning and can impact child development while improving social skills.

Hydrotherapy

Our working partnership with Butler College provides access for students who require Hydrotherapy to utilise their hydro pool. Four staff members have completed the Aquatic Rescue for Hydrotherapy through RLSWA. Unfortunately, due to the restrictions imposed during the pandemic, Hydrotherapy was not offered in 2021.

Protective Behaviours

Students participate in weekly lessons on Protective Behaviours to assist in preparing them to be independent in their community. A committee has created classroom kits to cover the various levels and concepts in accordance with the Department of Education's requirements of the program.

Direct Instruction and Explicit Teaching

The Merriwa Campus has been engaged in Spelling Mastery sessions with very pleasing results over several years. Students are assessed to determine appropriate groups and participate each morning for intensive sessions. Students who do not meet the skill requirements of this program are provided small group instruction in the Language for Learning or Phonemic Awareness programs in the ESC.

Explicit teaching of concepts and skills is a very effective methodology and is utilised extensively within the Centre across all learning areas and within the playground.

Whole School Planning in Literacy, Communication and Numeracy

The intent of our whole school approach is to enable effective longitudinal data and to track student progress in Literacy and Numeracy development over the years. The whole school plans are developmental and guided by the requirements of the WA Curriculum, Early Years Learning Framework and Kindy Guidelines, and *ABLEWA*.

In Literacy, learning activities focus on phonemic awareness and develop student knowledge of letter sounds. The consistent approach allows students to establish emergent literacy skills using a common approach from class to class.

Effective communication is a human right and is therefore considered a priority at Merriwa ESC. We have adopted the motto "Communication- Anytime, anyplace" Our focus is to ensure that all students have access to effective methods of communication in order to participate in all curriculum areas.

The whole school focus in numeracy is to establish skills which enable students to recognise numbers and number patterns, and to have a basic understanding of time and money concepts.

Integrated Studies – Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths (STEM)

Merriwa ESC supports an integrated curriculum which provides opportunities for students to explore **Aboriginal and Cultural Education, Science, Health, Humanities and Social Sciences, Technologies and The Arts** through practical hands-on activities. The integrated approach allows teachers to use a thematic focus when planning learning content and incorporate the topic across all learning areas each term. Considerable time and effort towards creating STEM kits and resources to complement whole school planning was undertaken throughout 2020 and 2021. Staff have collaborated to ensure consistency across the Centre and forward plan the topics to be covered each semester.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

MESC has a continued focus on building our capacity to enable success for all students and endeavour to realise this through a consistent approach to teaching and behaviour management. Our shared belief that all students have the capacity to learn and must be given the opportunity to achieve their individual goals drives our curriculum delivery.

A consistent approach to the teaching and learning processes in Literacy, Communication and Numeracy is paramount in ensuring success for all students. Collaborative planning and development of whole school plans in these curriculum areas has been fundamental in ensuring consistent practises and shared understanding. Explicit teaching and utilising a structured approach is an expectation.

Focus areas for 2022 continue to centre around developing emergent literacy and communication skills, and numeracy.

Integrated Studies will continue to incorporate Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) elements to foster creative thinking and to develop skills for lifelong learning.

TRANSITION TO HIGH SCHOOL

Parents and students of Year 6 were invited to visit the local high schools in readiness for their transition to secondary schooling. This allowed families to make informed decisions about the most appropriate placement for their child. Merriwa ESC students are eligible to attend either Butler College or Belridge SHS ESC. Four students graduated Yr 6 at the end of 2021 and went on to different locations for Yr 7. In semester 2 of 2021 students in Year 6 participated in various transition activities in order to prepare them for secondary school. Transition programs assist both parent and child to feel at ease and become familiar with their new surroundings.

STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Student Progress and Assessment Tools

Student assessment is a key aspect of the school's learning model. The school has a strategic data collection/assessment process that allows us to make judgments about our performance in student achievement, both academic and non-academic, and school operations.

A focus on establishing consistency with whole school assessment allows staff to track student progress over time. Classroom based assessments and whole school testing requirements are administered early in Term 1 and again in Term 4 to determine the student's baseline and to follow incremental progress annually. Diagnostic assessment tools inform teaching and learning programs. Each student has an education program designed to meet their individual need with a focus on the student's level of ability, provides a challenge and allows for successful achievement of goals.

Assessment data is stored in a student tracking file to illustrate student achievement and progress but also to identify areas of concern. Teachers utilise the Letters and Sounds Tracking Tool and have implemented a comprehensive assessment tool for Maths.

The Abilities Based Learning Education WA (ABLEWA) assessment tool is endorsed by School Curriculum and Standards Authority (SCSA) and is available for use by all WA schools where an alternative tool to track the progress of students with special educational needs is required. Merriwa ESC teaching staff have completed training and utilise this tool annually to track progress of students, as part of their routine planning.

School staff are committed to improving the children's competencies in Literacy, Communication, and Numeracy to enable children to develop educational outcomes and life skills. Developing these competencies have links in all curriculum areas.

The assessment process has a focus on relevant and meaningful data that enables future planning.

Individual student goals are set and are addressed through individual education plans using the SEN framework and ABLEWA tools. These are consistently tracked and monitored for formal reporting each semester.

Teaching staff utilised the planning tools on the Reporting to Parents platform, setting appropriate goals against the curriculum content descriptors to design student individual education plans (IEPs) throughout the year. Upon review at the end of 2020 it was evident that a more consistent outline was required to ensure meaningful data on the achievement of IEP goals. In 2020 the range of Content Descriptors (CD) used to formulate student IEPs was too varied, ranging from 15 to 32 and the number of goals ranged from 31 to 108. Teacher moderation and discussion around consistency in our IEP requirements resulted in agreement to identify an appropriate number of content descriptors (CD) under the report headings with up to 3 goals per outcome (CD). This was implemented in 2021 resulting in a more consistent approach.

An improved rate of 66% of students achieved 75% of their IEP goals covering all learning areas, which indicates that the expectations and possibly number of goals are better, but possibly still too high. However, our attendance rate may also have impacted on the progress and achievement of goals as only 47% of students met the required 90% or more attendance rate. Absenteeism significantly impacts of student progress.



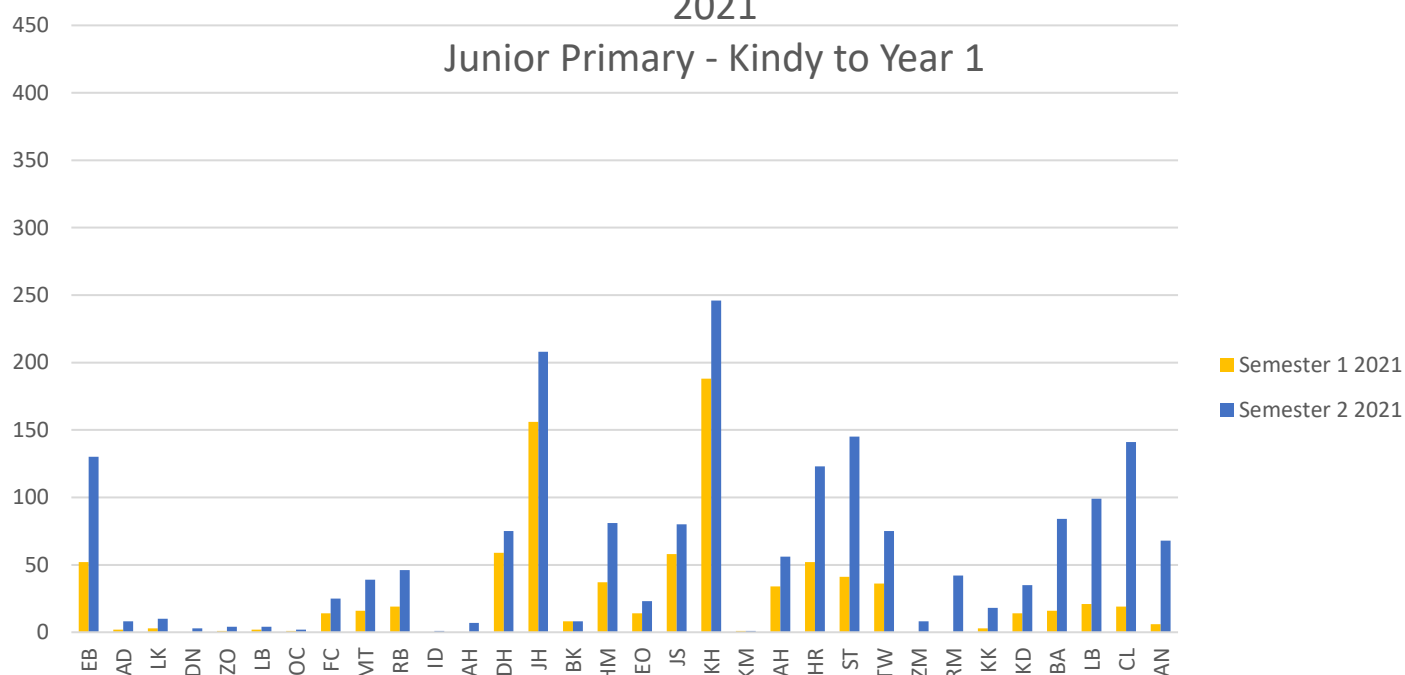
Augmentative Alternative Communication (AAC)

The AAC committee identified 56% of students who require a dedicated system of communication for more effective interaction with others. Teachers liaised with parents/carers and speech therapists to provide targeted support for these students. The intervention ensured an opportunity for all students to have an effective means to communicate. Staff continue to collaborate to ensure that communication goals are explicit, relevant and purposeful for each student. All staff attended professional learning workshops early in 2021 to build their skill and understanding of various communication tools. The committee created Pragmatic Organisation Dynamic Display (PODD) books for each staff member to encourage intensive use in the classrooms and easy access during playground duty and outdoor activities.

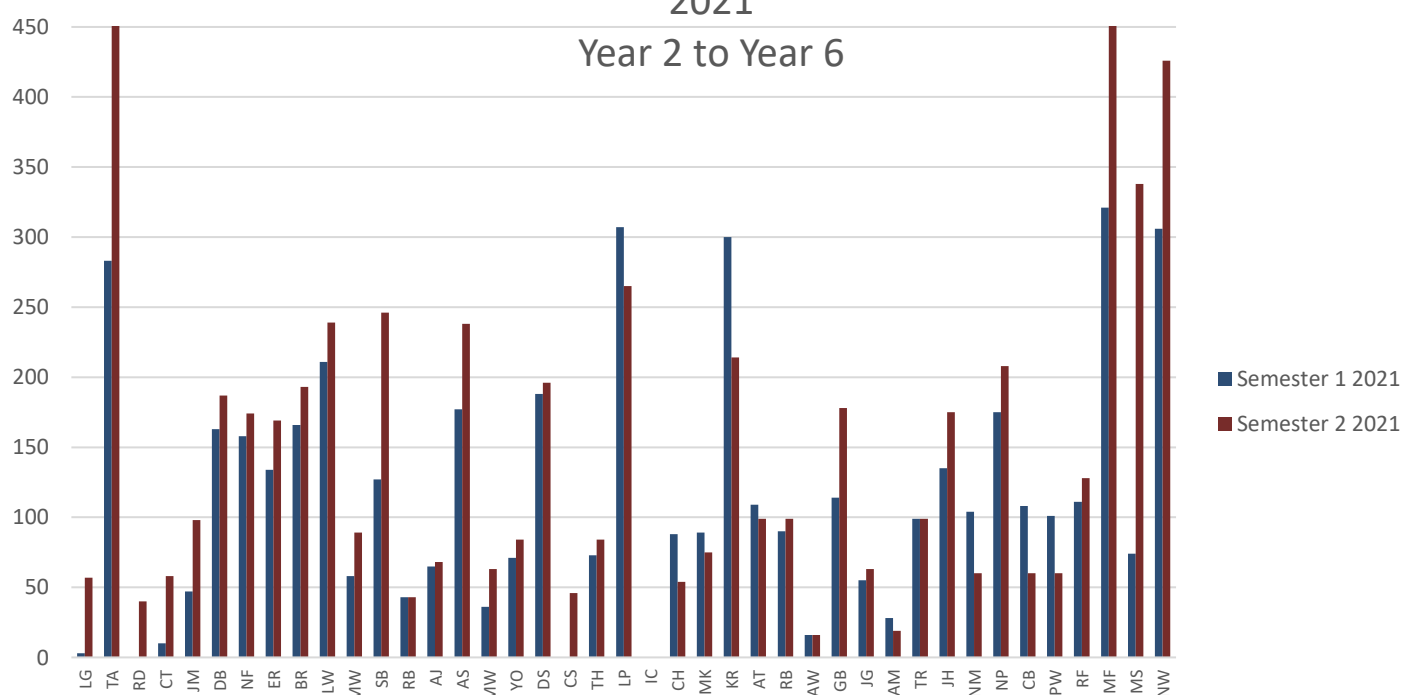
Literacy

Students are assessed to identify their starting point in the Letters and Sounds program. Explicit teaching within each phase, according to the whole school Literacy plan, provides the child with the skills to move into subsequent phases over time. Results show considerable progress for some individuals over the years. However, the majority of students have made steady, or incremental, gains across the Letters and Sounds phases. 96.6% of junior students (K-Yr 2) and 70% of senior students (Yr 3-6) have shown progress from semester 1 to semester 2 in 2021. Overall, 83.3% of all students have made gains in their Letters and Sounds knowledge which meets our desired target. Many students are in Phase One of the program, however an increasing number of students are moving into Phases Two and Three. Students have demonstrated gradual improvements in understanding the basic skills of literacy learning and their progress is documented using the Letters and Sounds Tracking Tool throughout the year. Teachers use a variety of strategies including an explicit teaching approach, drills and hands-on learning tasks to develop these fundamental skills of literacy to facilitate reading and writing.

Letters and Sounds
2021
Junior Primary - Kindy to Year 1



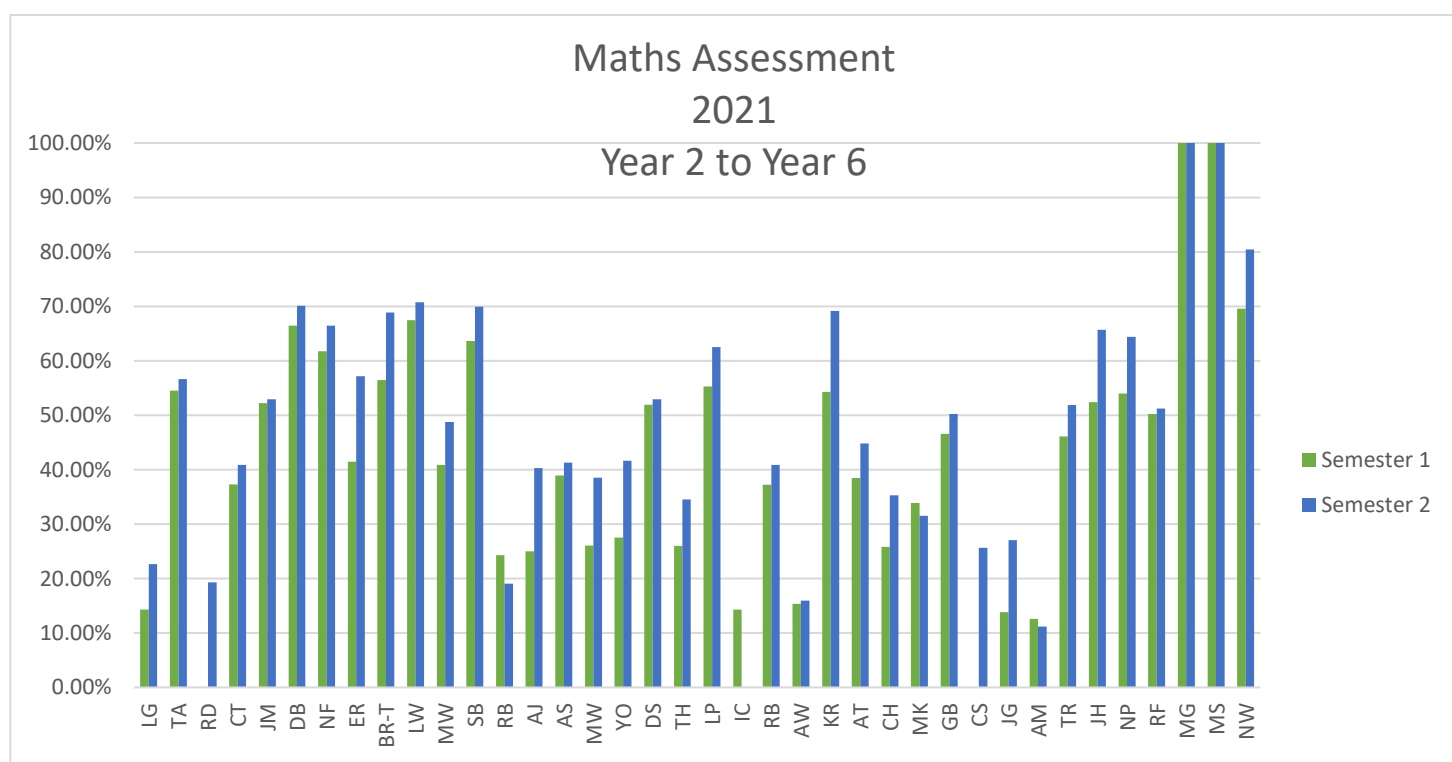
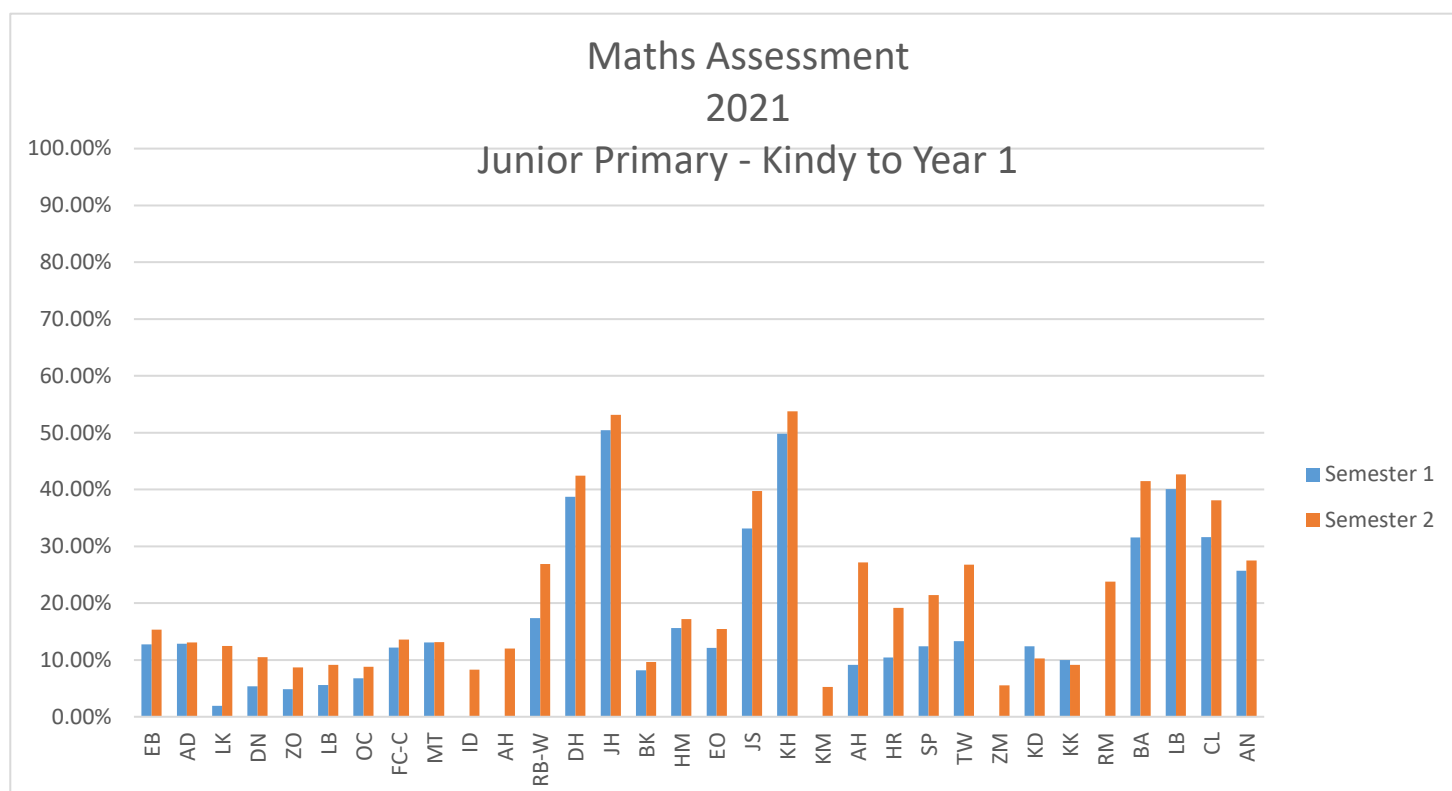
Letters and Sounds
2021
Year 2 to Year 6



Numeracy

MESC has developed a whole school approach to ensure that students practise basic skills in Numeracy. A program of drills, rotational activities, hands-on learning using concrete and abstract materials, explicit teaching and regular revision is implemented in all classrooms. The whole school data collection tool allows for staff to assess achievement during hands-on experiences. During 2020, teaching staff were introduced to a comprehensive maths assessment tool which aligns seamlessly with our whole school plan. The tool is a continuum of learning written against ABLEWA and WA Curriculum performance descriptors. Teachers work collaboratively, utilising data to group students according to level of ability for more efficient teaching and learning. Each class has a Maths Kit of resources to ensure consistent delivery of concepts from class to class, year to year. 78.5% of junior students (K-Yr 2) have made gains against their individual level of understanding of numeracy skills while 92% of senior students (Yr 3-6) have shown steady progress over the year. Overall 85.25% of all students have made gains in Numeracy. This meets our desired 80% target.

With a whole school approach, it is expected that levels of numeracy will continue to improve over time.



Data Analysis

Early Childhood

The Letters and Sounds and Maths assessment data demonstrate that the majority of students in the early childhood cohort have made progress. During Term 2 the assessments were completed to inform planning and teaching of phonological awareness and phonemic awareness. Follow up assessments demonstrated progress made for most students. Maths assessment data was used to inform planning and teaching of number, and to develop meaningful IEP goals. It was noted that Maths Pre-Foundation Level data could not be used for comparison from Semesters 1 to Semester 2, due to task modifications to include more nuanced assessments.

Teachers were able to provide reasonable explanations for those students who had limited or no progress, or had regressed. Deficits could be attributed to high absentee levels, disrupted home life, or a new medical diagnosis. Lower results in the Maths data in Semester 2, was attributed to teachers testing more accurately as they became more familiar with the assessment process.

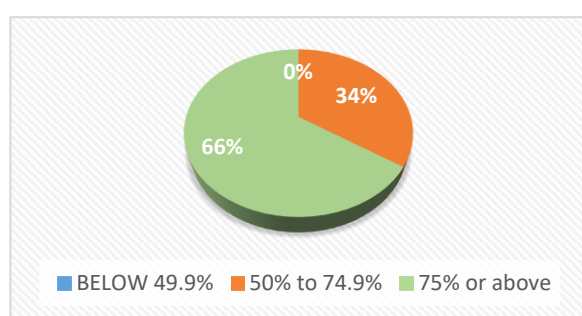
The teachers agree that the programs used are effective. Adaptations were made to meet the needs of individual students, particularly those with limited verbal capacity, and to enable students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills more effectively. The early childhood Professional Learning Committee (PLC) collaborated and agreed that there is a need to focus on social and emotional regulation, social skills and communication so that students are better equipped to participate and engage in assessments effectively. The PLC have planned to collaborate in 2022 to develop integrated groups for Maths and English so that students can be taught within similar ability groups. There are plans to develop an outdoor learning environment for students from all early childhood classes to learn together, with a focus on social skills, communication and emotional regulation.

Year 3 to Year 6

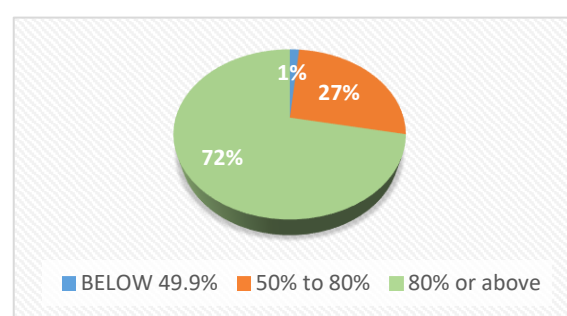
The senior PLC has analysed data for the 2021 year. It was evident that the progress made for all students was reasonable. The Letters and Sounds Data showed steady improvement for all students throughout the year, proving that the program is effective. However, the Senior PLC discussed that it is often hard to find age-appropriate activities to compliment the program. It was also discussed that new staff had not completed training in this area, and that program delivery is not consistent throughout the Centre. The PLC discussed the possibility of looking at the Sounds Write program and a consistent handwriting approach for students who can already write. The PLC will bring this suggestion to the English Curriculum leader for consideration.

The new maths assessment tool has proved to be an effective measurement of the students' abilities and to determine areas for improvement. The tool was effective as it eliminated teacher judgement, and allowed for clear establishment of SMART IEP goals.

For the students whose data was inconsistent, this could be justified due to medical, or substantial absences throughout the year.



Goals achieved



Attendance Rates

Overall data analysis shows a clear correlation between high IEP goal achievement and high attendance rates.

Academic Targets and Non-Academic Targets

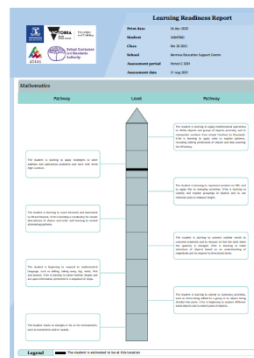
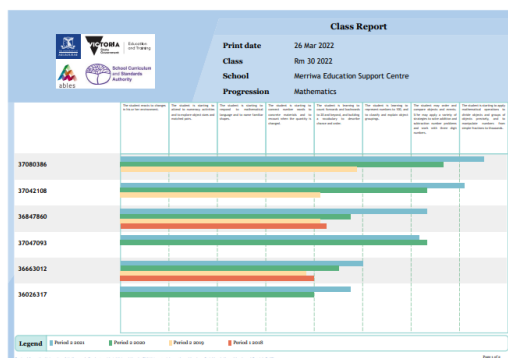
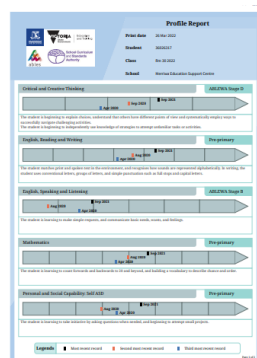
- A larger percentage of students demonstrated improvements in individual literacy, numeracy and communication goals, and steady progress across the years.
- Incremental achievement is evident through comparison of student IEP goals and subsequent progress over the year.
- The Abilities Based Learning Education WA (ABLEWA) assessment tool provided evidence of individual achievement in the areas of English, Reading and Writing; Listening and Speaking and Personal and Social Capability.
- A gradual reduction of incident reports for behaviour and injury throughout the year indicates that behaviour management strategies and staff expertise has been effective when managing challenging students.
- Overall positive feedback from staff, students and parents/carers in community surveys (2020) indicates a sense of trust and satisfaction in the programs provided, the management of the school and the standard of education and inclusive practices available for all students.

Abilities Based Learning Education WA (ABLEWA) Assessment Data

The assessments have been designed to describe skills and abilities that teachers can observe in everyday school and classroom contexts and interactions with students. Therefore, teachers don't need to test students before completing the online assessments, nor do students participate directly in the assessment. The assessments are in the form of an observational survey that takes approximately 20 minutes for teachers to complete for each student.

Teachers are required to complete the assessments for each student in Term 3 for the following learning domains; Digital Literacy, English – Speaking and Listening, English – Reading and Writing, Mathematics and Personal and Social Capability. Student achievement in each domain will guide the teacher to the appropriate curriculum level and teaching and learning strategies used to develop an individual education plan.

This year with the changes to ABLEWA, we were able to produce graphs based on classroom data, allowing teachers to analyse student progress and compare levels of students across all learning areas for grouping. This assisted with planning. It is important to note that some changes have been made to the tool, questions were adjusted, so some comparative data is still slightly inaccurate. Teachers were able to work together to analyse data together, identify reasons for a student's decline, for example, medical issues, and assist in cross classroom planning.



Behaviour Data

Teachers record behaviour incident information on the INTEGRIS data system as required. Risk Management Plans and Individual Behaviour Management plans are consistently followed and reviewed to ensure the safety of students and staff. Critical incidents, including physical assault, accidents and injury to students or staff, are reported online as they occur.

PROGRESS TOWARDS BUSINESS PLAN

TARGET 1	TARGET 2	TARGET 3
All students to demonstrate tangible improvement in individual goals in curriculum priority areas	ABLEWA comparative data indicates progression of achievement annually for 80% of students	80% of students will achieve 80% of their IEP goals in each Semester report
<i>Achieved.</i> All students made some progress against their IEP goals.	<i>Achieved.</i> A small percentage of students remained constant or showed some regression across the ABLEWA domains.	<i>Not achieved.</i> 66% of students achieved higher than 75% of their IEP goals.
TARGET 4	TARGET 5	TARGET 6
90% positive rating from staff, students and parents/carers in biennial community survey	Student attendance rates will be higher than 90% with authorised absences factored into the rate	All students will participate in PBS 'Passport' initiative with 75% reaching 'Gold' level by the end of term 4
<i>Achieved.</i> 94-100% satisfaction rating across the community in the 2020 Survey. Another survey is due for distribution in 2022	<i>Not achieved.</i> 72% of students achieved an attendance rate higher than 80%	<i>Achieved.</i> The goal is less relevant to younger students but well utilised by students from Year 3 to Year 6.



NATIONAL SCHOOL OPINION SURVEY- 2020

Parents and Carers Response

From the 18 submitted survey results there was an overwhelming vote of confidence for our school with the majority of parents/carers indicating their satisfaction with learning programs and support for their child's overall progress. Our parents would confidently recommend our school to others and agree that the school is well managed. Staff have analysed the data to ensure the areas of uncertainty are better addressed across the school. Respectful relationships with parents/carers, listening to their concerns and opinions is paramount for successful partnerships and better outcomes for students. MESC will conduct another Community Survey mid 2022.

94% to 100% high satisfaction rating.
100% agree that their child likes being at school and feels safe at MESC.
100% agree that their child is making good progress at school and are satisfied with the overall standard of education at MESC.
100% agree that MESC is well led and would recommend our school to others.
100% are satisfied with levels of communication and feel that staff provide useful feedback.



MESC Staff Survey Responses

From a staff of 34 teachers and education assistants, 33 responded to the survey in October, 2020. Staff morale is high considering the challenges experienced during a pandemic and the complexities of this occupation. They have indicated by majority, that they feel valued for the work they do, are satisfied with the quality of education provided for the students and believe that the staff care about the students. Staff have indicated that they would recommend Merriwa ESC to others and agree that the school is well managed by an effective leadership team.

94% to 100% high satisfaction rating.
100% agree that MESC staff expect students to do their best and treat the students equitably.
100% agree that parents and students can talk to teachers about their concerns.
97% are satisfied with the overall standard of education achieved at MESC and believe that the teachers are effective.
100% would recommend MESC to others and believe that staff are skilled professionals who care about the students.

Community Survey Comments – Students, Parents/Carers and Staff

- *I like my school because it is fun.*
- *I love school because I miss my teachers.*
- *I love MESC. It has been a positive influence in my son's life and very accommodating to his therapy needs.*
- *Thank you heaps to all the staff, you all do an amazing job.*
- *I am very happy with the staff at MESC. They have been above and beyond in terms of helping my son achieve his best in all things. I feel very proud when I tell people about MESC and all its wonderful staff.*
- *Staff at MESC are a collaborative team who support each other to meet the best outcomes for all students.*
- *As a staff member at MESC I feel very supported in my role.*
- *Great place to work, very supportive team. Well led which shines through in all that we do.*



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2021 SCHOOL YEAR

We successfully provide a learning environment that supports students with diverse learning needs to develop the academic, creative, physical and social skills that will enable them to participate in, and actively contribute to, the wider community. Together with Merriwa Primary School, we are able to promote shared values of learning, excellence, equity and care.

We are proud to highlight the following achievements:

- Provision of a secure, safe and positive environment.
- Recruitment of specially trained and highly skilled staff.
- Successful School Readiness Program which provides assistance and guidance for families with pre-kindergarten children living with disabilities and identified learning needs.
- Innovative teaching strategies adapted to suit individual learning styles.
- Explicit teaching which contributes to the progress of students in the areas of literacy and numeracy.
- Priority given to enable each child to access learning towards reaching their potential.
- The provision of an Individualised Education Plan for each child, developed in close consultation with parents.
- Small classes with a high staff/student ratio providing individual and small group instruction as required.
- Effective activity-based learning strategies.
- An increase in community based activities to enhance student wellbeing, mental health and ultimately, resilience.
- Creation of positive Home / School links through various communication strategies, including Class Dojo.
- Excellent community access and independent living programs.
- Collaboration with Merriwa Primary School in providing integrated learning programs.
- A strong commitment to the use of technology aided instruction.
- Learning with Information Communication Technology which includes interactive whiteboards, computers, iPads and robotics across all curriculum areas.
- Successful use of Mini Schedules, Augmentative Alternative Communication tools and visual learning tools.
- Effective use of sensory programs and sensory breaks embedded into individual work schedules.
- Innovative collaboration with NMTafe, ECU and UWA in providing practice placements for pre-service Education Assistants, Teachers and Psychology students.



SPECIAL EVENTS

Several special events were cancelled during 2021 due to the implications of Covid-19 and the restrictions imposed on the community. We were able to enjoy some special activities listed below:

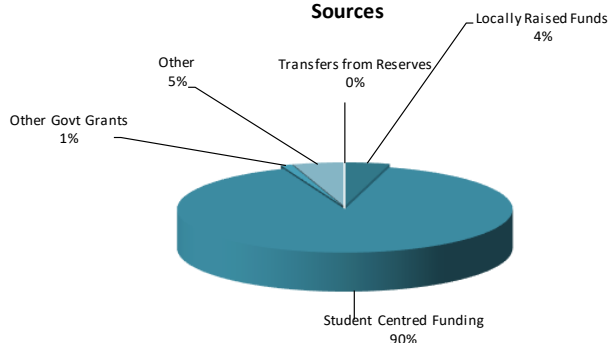
- Year 6 Day Camp Activities and Beach swimming
- Combined ESC Interschool Athletics Day
- Combined ESC Performance Arts Day
- Book Week – Character Parade
- Principal's Afternoon Tea reward events
- NAIDOC Celebrations
- Literary and Numeracy week
- Year 6 Graduation Ceremony
- Social Dance Lessons
- Whole School Christmas Concert



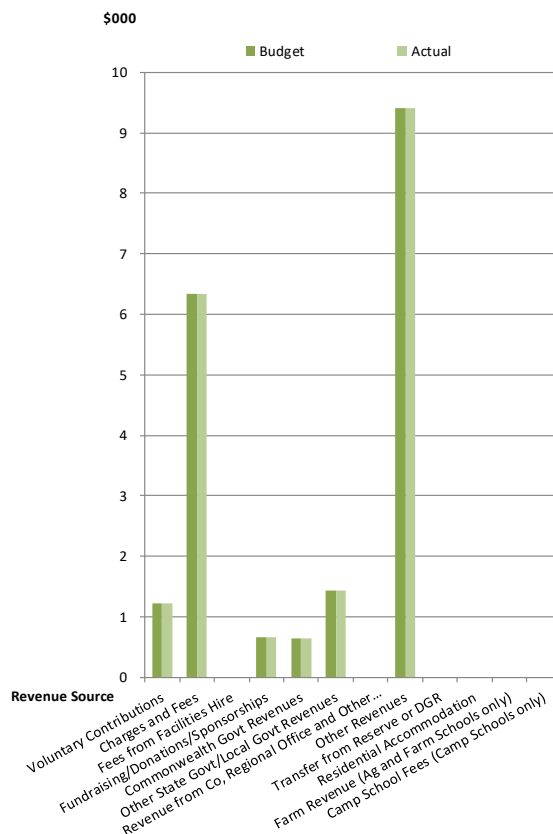
FINANCIAL STATEMENT

	Revenue - Cash & Salary Allocation	Budget	Actual
1	Voluntary Contributions	\$ 1,221.00	\$ 1,221.00
2	Charges and Fees	\$ 6,343.00	\$ 6,342.22
3	Fees from Facilities Hire	\$ -	\$ -
4	Fundraising/Donations/Sponsorships	\$ 654.00	\$ 654.00
5	Commonwealth Govt Revenues	\$ 635.00	\$ 634.60
6	Other State Govt/Local Govt Revenues	\$ 1,422.00	\$ 1,422.30
7	Revenue from Co, Regional Office and Other Schools	\$ -	\$ -
8	Other Revenues	\$ 9,414.00	\$ 9,414.55
9	Transfer from Reserve or DGR	\$ -	\$ -
10	Residential Accommodation	\$ -	\$ -
11	Farm Revenue (Ag and Farm Schools only)	\$ -	\$ -
12	Camp School Fees (Camp Schools only)	\$ -	\$ -
	Total Locally Raised Funds	\$ 19,689.00	\$ 19,688.67
	Opening Balance	\$ 2,704.00	\$ 2,703.98
	Student Centred Funding	\$ 172,595.00	\$ 172,595.33
	Total Cash Funds Available	\$ 194,988.00	\$ 194,987.98
	Total Salary Allocation	\$ -	\$ -
	Total Funds Available	\$ 194,988.00	\$ 194,987.98

Current Year Actual Cash Sources

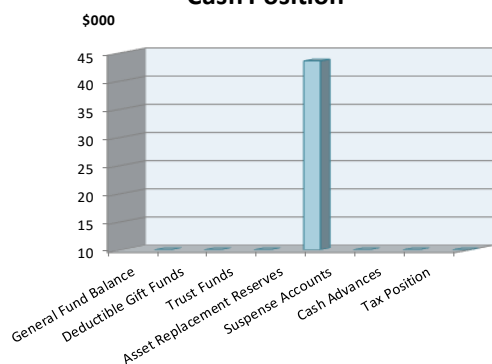


Locally Generated Revenue - Budget vs Actual

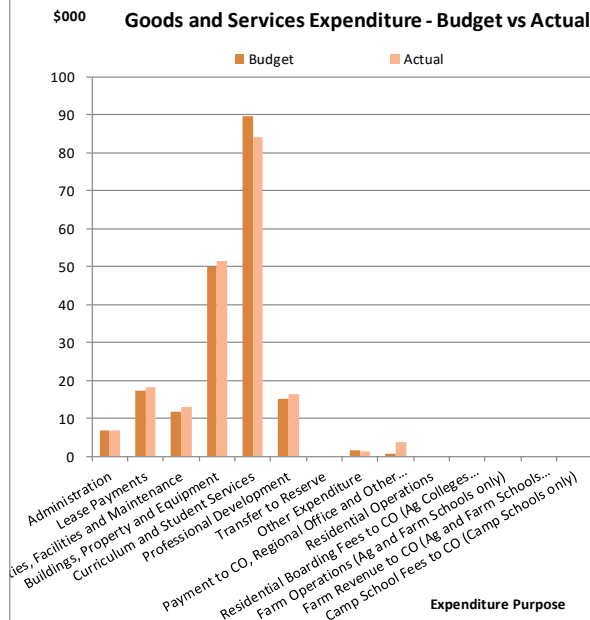


	Expenditure - Cash and Salary	Budget	Actual
1	Administration	\$ 6,740.00	\$ 6,768.50
2	Lease Payments	\$ 17,200.00	\$ 18,194.74
3	Utilities, Facilities and Maintenance	\$ 11,747.00	\$ 12,863.79
4	Buildings, Property and Equipment	\$ 49,737.00	\$ 51,380.71
5	Curriculum and Student Services	\$ 89,500.00	\$ 84,043.68
6	Professional Development	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 16,289.93
7	Transfer to Reserve	\$ -	\$ -
8	Other Expenditure	\$ 1,412.00	\$ 1,301.86
9	Payment to CO, Regional Office and Other Schools	\$ 600.00	\$ 3,623.25
10	Residential Operations	\$ -	\$ -
11	Residential Boarding Fees to CO (Ag Colleges only)	\$ -	\$ -
12	Farm Operations (Ag and Farm Schools only)	\$ -	\$ -
13	Farm Revenue to CO (Ag and Farm Schools only)	\$ -	\$ -
14	Camp School Fees to CO (Camp Schools only)	\$ -	\$ -
	Total Goods and Services Expenditure	\$ 191,936.00	\$ 194,466.46
	Total Forecast Salary Expenditure	\$ -	\$ -
	Total Expenditure	\$ 191,936.00	\$ 194,466.46
	Cash Budget Variance	\$ 3,052.00	

Cash Position



Goods and Services Expenditure - Budget vs Actual



Cash Position as at:

Bank Balance	\$ 33,691.24
Made up of:	
1 General Fund Balance	\$ 521.52
2 Deductible Gift Funds	\$ -
3 Trust Funds	\$ -
4 Asset Replacement Reserves	\$ 43,523.33
5 Suspense Accounts	\$ (7,852.61)
6 Cash Advances	\$ -
7 Tax Position	\$ (2,501.00)
Total Bank Balance	\$ 33,691.24

COMMUNITY LINKS

Agency Support

Merriwa ESC works closely with various agencies to ensure successful outcomes for students. Staff incorporate strategies recommended for individual students by their therapists. We welcome the support from Disability Services Commission and Therapy Focus- Speech Therapist, Physiotherapist and Occupational Therapist; Ability Centre and Autism Association who support our students with disabilities.

The Education Department provides student support to schools through SSEN: Schools of Special Education Needs- Disability, Sensory, Medical and Mental Health. These services are utilised and greatly appreciated by staff at Merriwa ESC.

Another agency with which we have built a mutual partnership include the Independent Living Centre, their library of resources has been well used by our students. We continue to work closely with NMTafe and ECU and benefit from the enthusiasm and developing expertise of pre service teachers and education assistants.



North
Metropolitan



School Chaplain – Youth Care

The Merriwa campus is pleased to engage the services of a school chaplain, working closely with YouthCare to ensure a good fit for our school community. Ashley Smith has forged respectful working relationships with parents, students and staff across the campus. He enthusiastically interacts with children from pre-kindy to Year 6 to support mental health and well-being and is keen to motivate all students during the recess and lunch breaks. The Breakfast Club is delighted to have Ash's support each morning.

Community Support

Parents provide great support to the various ESC programs and are invited to participate in the development and endorsement of Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for their child and to participate in teacher/parent meetings to discuss semester reports. Information gained from parents through informal feedback help staff to modify and improve our teaching and learning programs.

A combined School Board is made up of ESC and Primary School staff, parents and elected community members who endorse our plans, policies, fees and charges and the school budget.

Merriwa Schools pride themselves on school/home partnerships and encourage all parents to make arrangements to discuss concerns with their child's teacher. MESC also encourages the use of our Communication app - DoJo to facilitate regular contact between school and home. The combined schools P&C support our school through fundraising initiatives.

Students from various universities and NMTafe were given the opportunity to complete their practicum assessments with the expert guidance and mentoring from our staff. Our regular team of relief staff ensured the continuity of programs and have developed positive relationships with staff and students in the ESC. We thank them for their loyalty.

We extend our sincere thanks to our wonderfully supportive community.



Foodbank
An Australia Without Hunger



PARENT, STAFF AND STUDENT STATEMENTS



"Teaching staff are dedicated and hardworking and support one another to make sure that the individual needs of students are catered to. The collaboration has been so helpful. Staff have a good rapport with the families and therapists and genuinely care for the children. Compassionate and effective leadership has made this a wonderfully supportive place to work."

"Everyone has been so welcoming and supportive and the work environment that you guys have achieved is amazing! Thank you for everyone's help and support and I look forward to working with you all."

"Thank you all for welcoming me into your school with such open arms. It's so nice coming to work every morning knowing that people are there to support me in every way, especially with the transition from mainstream to education support. Special thanks to my fellow teachers for supplying me with lots of resources. The work environment is something you guys have obviously worked so hard to achieve, so I just wanted to say that it shows and that I am really enjoying working with all of you! Your support has really helped me find my feet in such a new environment."

Staff

"I wanted to thank you for the many years of an amazing collaborative relationships with the therapy teams to support student goals. The team and your students are very lucky to have you and your staff. Over my many years with Therapy Focus I have thoroughly enjoyed working at your school. "

"Sending you and all your exceptional staff the biggest THANK YOU for your support and welcoming approach to having us in your amazing school. The Team feel privileged indeed to work alongside yourselves."

"I have to say that working at Merriwa and in your classrooms, is amazing - everyone is so on board and responsive to strategies."

"THANKS go to all of YOU WONDERFUL human BEINGS. Thank you for the unwavering support and for giving us an extra special reason to get up in the mornings, especially when we realise our days involve a visit to the super MESC!!!! Please pass our grateful thanks to all your super staff."

Therapists

"MESC have gone above and beyond for my child and many other's children. I call you the Ed support whisperers. You have so much patience when my child has none, you show kindness and compassion when my child forgets how, you show that ANYONE of any culture, race or creed is important and wonderful yet you assist children to honour their individuality while they do their best. You include life skills like cooking and helping others as part of education and mostly you do this with a smile on your face. I could not be more grateful for all that you do and I am so glad there are teachers including EAs as wonderful as you!!"

"I love MESC. It has been a positive influence in my son's life and very accommodating to his therapy needs"

"Excellent team lead by an amazingly principal, students are happy and learning."

"I absolutely love sending my child to MESC! The care and consideration in placing my child in a suitable class with suitable teacher has been fantastic, especially this year! The sensory program run by Jayde is amazing and is the reason I chose to send my son to MESC. I love that the EAs care for my child and also have "proud mum moments" about things my child achieves. I could not ask for a better environment for my child to thrive."

Parents and Carers

