



MERRIWA
PRIMARY SCHOOLS

MERRIWA EDUCATION SUPPORT CENTRE

Independent Public School

'Learning for Life'



2022 ANNUAL REPORT



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SCHOOL BOARD REPORT

2022 has seen some easing of COVID-19 restrictions and a feeling that we are returning to some semblance of normalcy after the challenges of COVID-19 pandemic in previous years. While 2022 continues to see many challenges, Merriwa campus has once again pulled together. I have huge commendations for all staff that have worked tirelessly to provide a safe, responsive, and caring environment for our children, their families, and their communities.

The health and well-being of our students has been paramount during this challenging period. The Merriwa campus continues to implement 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.

The P&C have been very productive and proactive in 2022, and with easing community restrictions an exciting array of school events are underway: Halloween disco, Colour run and our community fete...just to name a few. These events would not be possible without the hard work of the P&C and their incredible fundraising initiatives.

Merriwa has a commitment that every child, regardless of personal circumstances, will make continued and sustained progress. This is reflected in the positive results achieved in our NAPLAN results and the achievement of personal student goals and targets. Through consistency in whole school programs, incredible leadership and targeted interventions, students on the Merriwa campus have thrived in 2022. This has also been demonstrated in the positive feedback we have received in our school survey results.

We are unapologetically aspirational in our goals for all our children, the success of which has been acknowledged by the Department of Education in our recent Public-School review. Merriwa primary has received the highest possible rating in all aspects of our school, with the Department of Education stating that our strong and stable leadership, high quality teaching, dedicated staff and our commitment to our communities have led to exceptional outcomes for our students. The hard work, dedication and enthusiasm of our staff team, P&C members, Board members and Students cannot go unnoticed throughout this process. Their dedication continues to make Merriwa campus an inclusive, responsive, safe, and caring environment.

2022 has seen some physical additions on campus with several new facilities and spaces being adapted and added to our campus. These exciting building works will continue into the beginning of 2023.

The Merriwa campus has seen several changes both in the staff team and Board membership. I would like to extend my deep gratitude for the contributions of our outgoing staff and Board members and offer a warm welcome to our new staff and Board 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 united to ensure our students and families remained safe while accessing learning as best we could over the past few years. The impact of the pandemic was felt throughout our community in various ways, and our school became a 'safe haven' for our students. We were able to keep routines and structures constant and the predictability of each day assisted the students to feel secure while the world around them became increasingly uncertain. Students adapted to this new normal and hygiene practices became part of their usual routine. I thank our families for their continued support of our school, and for their understanding in keeping sick children at home for everyone's safety.

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.

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. A number of ESC students benefit from the specialist subject teachers in the primary school who provide instruction in Science and Physical Education, through an application process with our partner school.

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. 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.

The ESC has experienced a constant increase in enrolments over the past few years and have welcomed the installation of early childhood classrooms and additional toilet blocks. Plans are in place to install another classroom during Term 1 of 2023. Our newly installed Reception office has also made a difference for the effective management of school operations.

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 63 in Semester 2, 2021 to 79 in December, 2022. 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 which impacts their ability to access learning in a mainstream 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 2022 Semester 2)

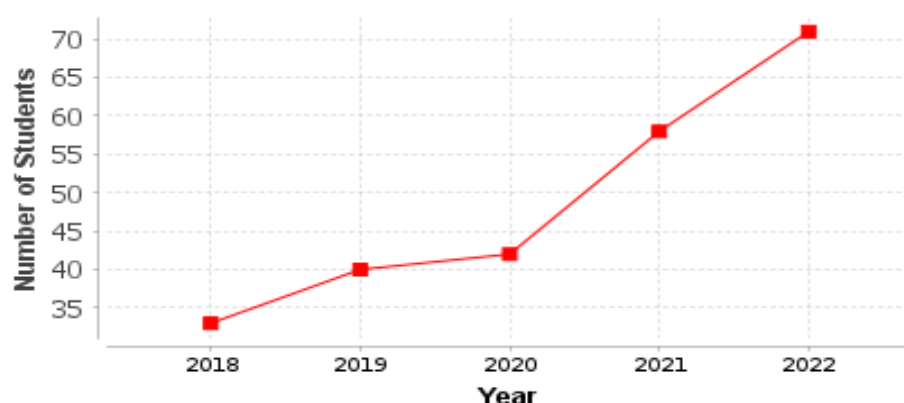
| Primary | Kin | PPR | Y01 | Y02 | Y03 | Y04 | Y05 | Y06 | Total |
|-----------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| Full Time | (4) | 15 | 12 | 7 | 18 | 6 | 8 | 5 | 75 |
| Part Time | 8 | | | | | | | | |

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

| | Kin | PPR | Pri | Sec | Total |
|--------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| Male | 4 | 12 | 44 | | 60 |
| Female | 4 | 3 | 12 | | 19 |
| Total | 8 | 15 | 56 | | 79 |

| | Kin | PPR | Pri | Sec | Total |
|----------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| Aboriginal | 1 | 1 | 4 | | 6 |
| Non-Aboriginal | 7 | 14 | 52 | | 73 |
| Total | 8 | 15 | 56 | | 79 |

Semester 2 Student Numbers



Note: Kindy numbers are not included in this graph

Attendance

Attendance rates have progressively declined over the past 3 years as students and their families were adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Merriwa ESC is working closely with families to re-engage vulnerable students. Student numbers have steadily increased and attendance rates are further impacted due to the ongoing therapy and medical needs of students whose condition determines their ability to attend regularly.

| | Attendance Category | | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|-----------|----------|--------|
| | Regular | At Risk | | |
| | | Indicated | Moderate | Severe |
| 2020 | 61.0% | 17.1% | 19.5% | 2.4% |
| 2021 | 25.4% | 33.9% | 32.2% | 8.5% |
| 2022 | 23.3% | 30.1% | 28.8% | 17.8% |
| WA Public Schools | 51.0% | 32.0% | 13.0% | 5.0% |

| | Non-Aboriginal | | Aboriginal | | Total | |
|------|----------------|-------------------|------------|-------------------|--------|-------------------|
| | School | WA Public Schools | School | WA Public Schools | School | WA Public Schools |
| 2020 | 86.7% | 93.2% | 91.8% | 77.6% | 87.1% | 91.9% |
| 2021 | 80.5% | 92.4% | 64.6% | 76.8% | 79.4% | 91% |
| 2022 | 77.8% | 88.3% | 62.5% | 69.5% | 76.6% | 86.6% |

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 | 2 | 1.6 | 0 |
| Total Administration Staff | 3 | 2.6 | 0 |
| Teaching Staff | | | |
| Teachers | 19 | 13.8 | 0 |
| Total Teaching Staff | 19 | 13.8 | 0 |
| School Support Staff | | | |
| Clerical / Administrative | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| Other Non-Teaching Staff | 39 | 35.7 | 0 |
| Total School Support Staff | 41 | 37.7 | 0 |
| Total | 63 | 54.1 | 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 merit selection, 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 2022 various merit selection processes were completed to appoint staff to vacated and new positions and to establish an additional classroom in 2023, 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.

The primary role of the P & C is for 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 over the playground equipment, picnic tables for senior students and audio visual equipment for the assembly area. In 2022, the P&C contributed funds to install a shed adjoining the under-cover assembly area and shade marquees for the ESC early childhood play space. Financial contributions were also provided to each school for the purchase of annual Book Awards 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 2023 and look forward to another 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 identified students were negotiated throughout the year. ESC students were successfully integrated with their peers in the playground during lunch and recess breaks, with appropriate supervision from the ESC staff who also explicitly teach play skills. These reciprocal programs are 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 co-regulate behaviour, emotions and energy states. Our Sensory Program has proven to be 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 safely cross the road, 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 2022. We hope to re-engage in 2023.

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

Only a small number of senior ESC students were successfully engaged in Spelling Mastery sessions with their primary school peers. 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 more appropriate Direct Instruction (DI) programs, such as: Language for Learning or Phonemic Awareness, within their classroom.

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, Kindy Guidelines, and *ABLEWA*.

In Literacy, learning activities focus on phonemic awareness and developing 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. In 2022, we introduced a small group of capable students to the Origo maths program as a means to extend their experiences, knowledge, and maths skills, with pleasing results.

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 2023 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. Five students graduated Yr 6 at the end of 2022 and went on to different locations for Yr 7. In Term 4 of 2022 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. The Year 6 graduation was a celebration of student achievement.

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 entered in a student tracking spreadsheet 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.

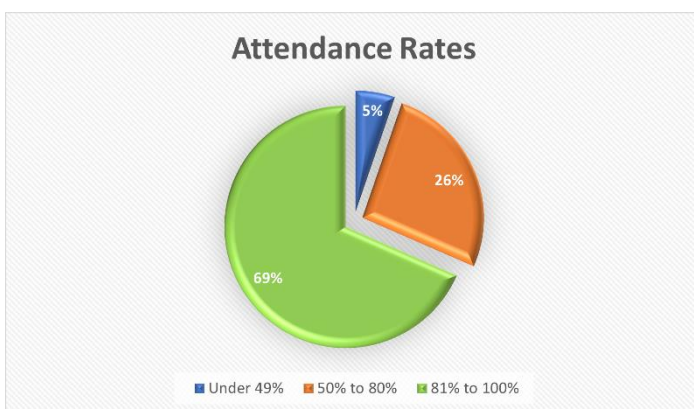
School staff are committed to improving the children's competencies in Literacy, Communication, and Numeracy to enable children to develop educational outcomes and life skills. Developing these competencies have links in all curriculum areas.

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. 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). The MESC Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting (CAR) policy outlines the agreed expectations. This was implemented in 2022 resulting in a more consistent approach.

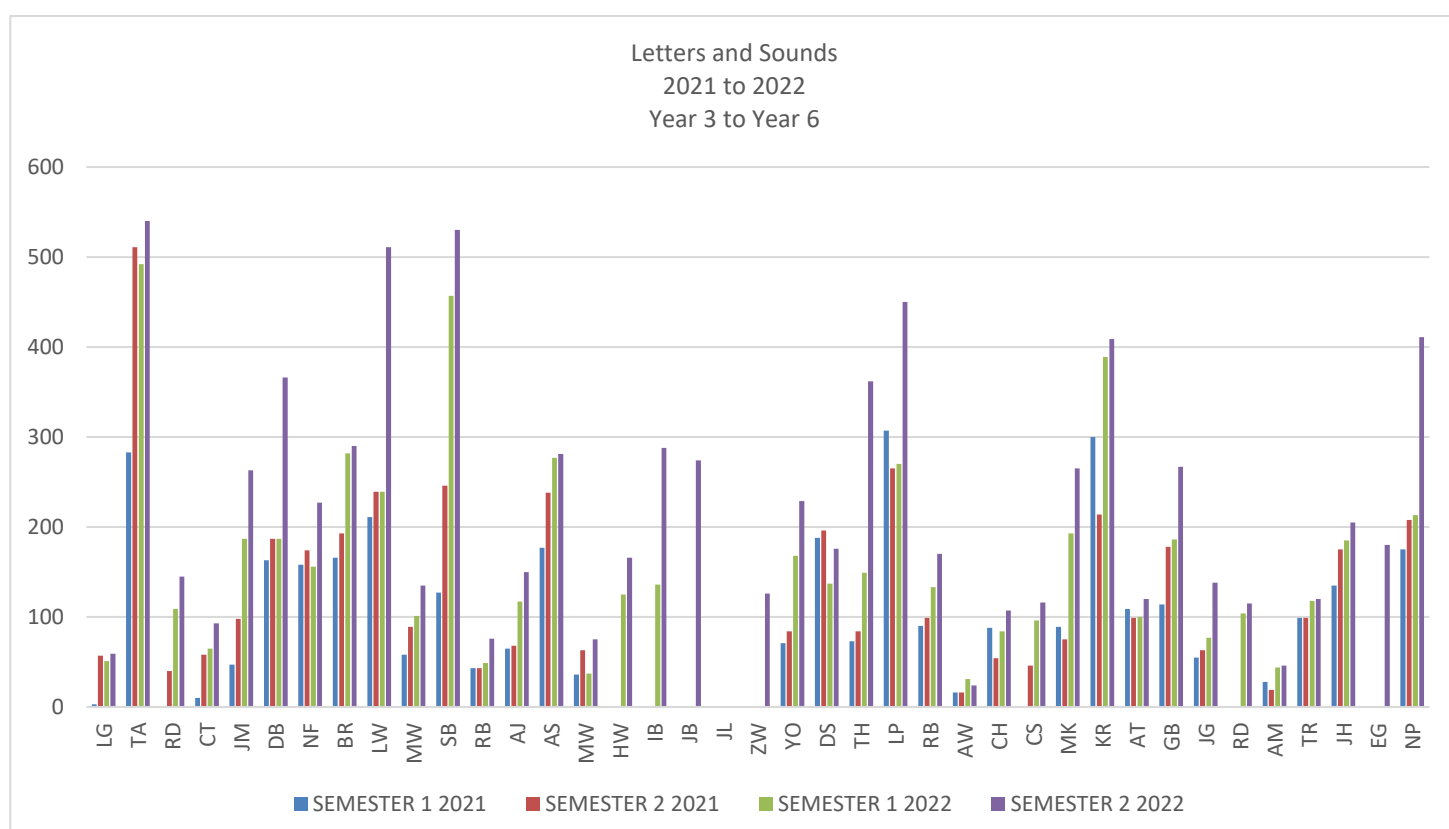
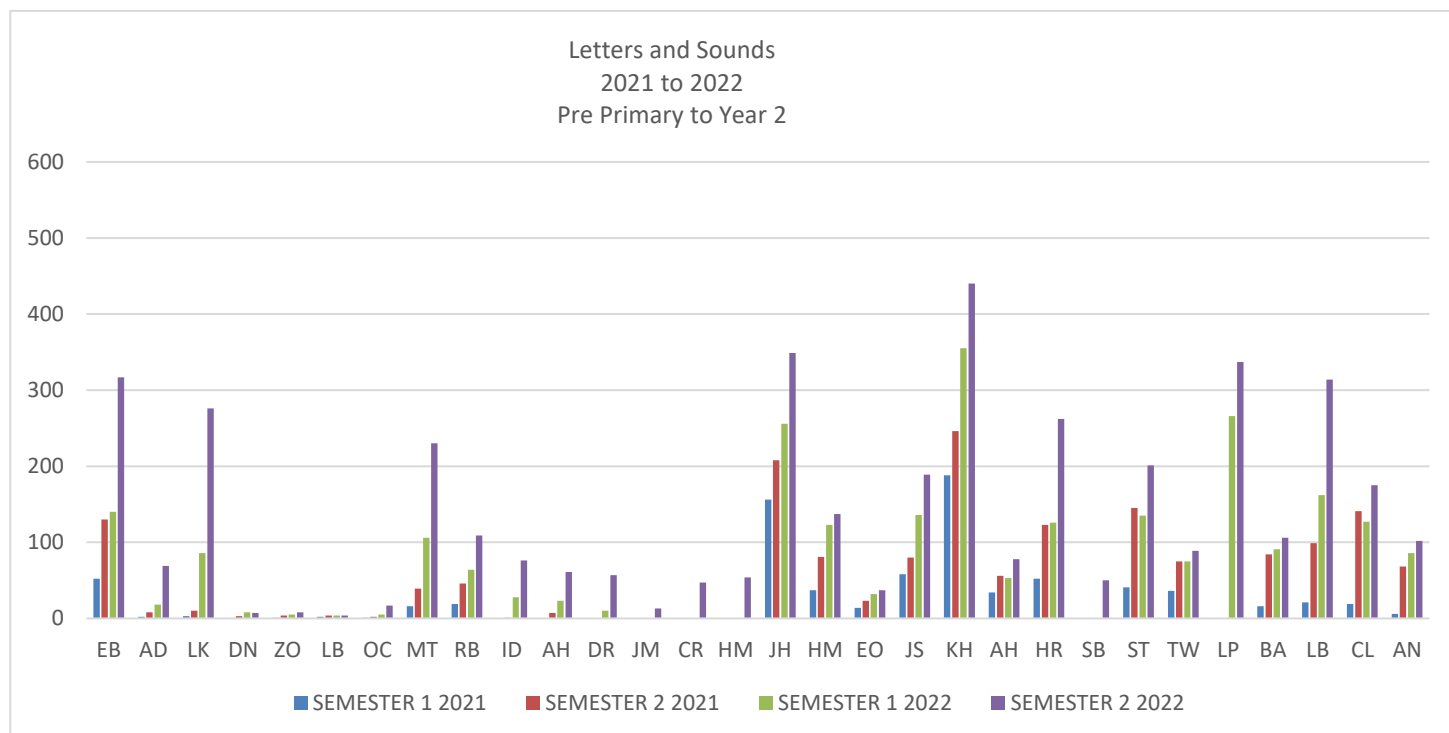
An improved rate of 75% of students achieved 75% of their IEP goals covering all learning areas, this is an increase of 9% from the previous year. While our attendance rate improved marginally, the impact on the progress and achievement of goals is evident. In 2022, 69% of students attended regularly -between 81% to 100%. Absenteeism significantly impacts student progress. The close alignment of 74% of goals reached with 69% high attendance demonstrates the correlation between achievement and regular attendance.



Overall data analysis shows a clear correlation between high IEP goal achievement and high attendance rates. While attendance rates improved for Semester 2, this graph illustrates the average attendance for 2022.

Literacy

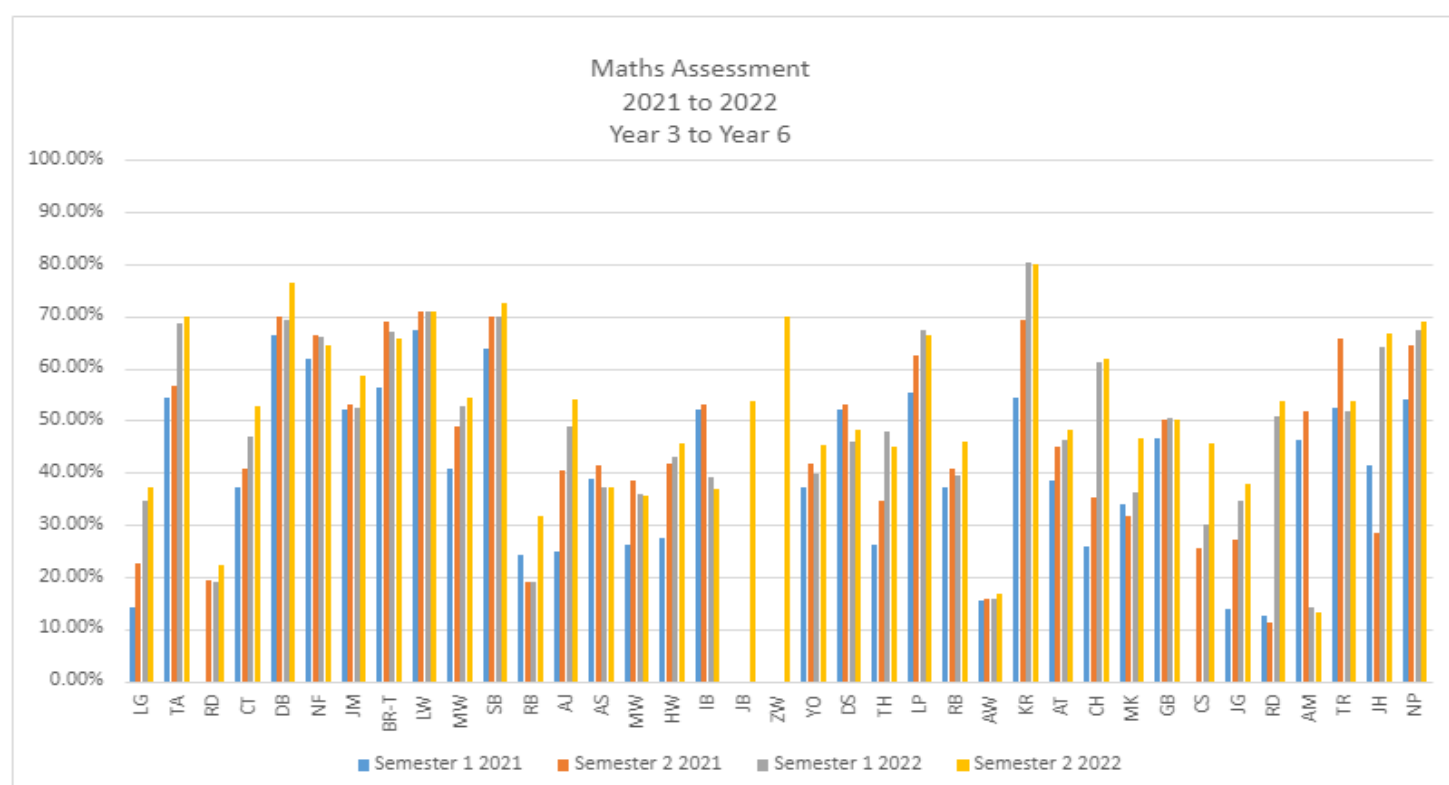
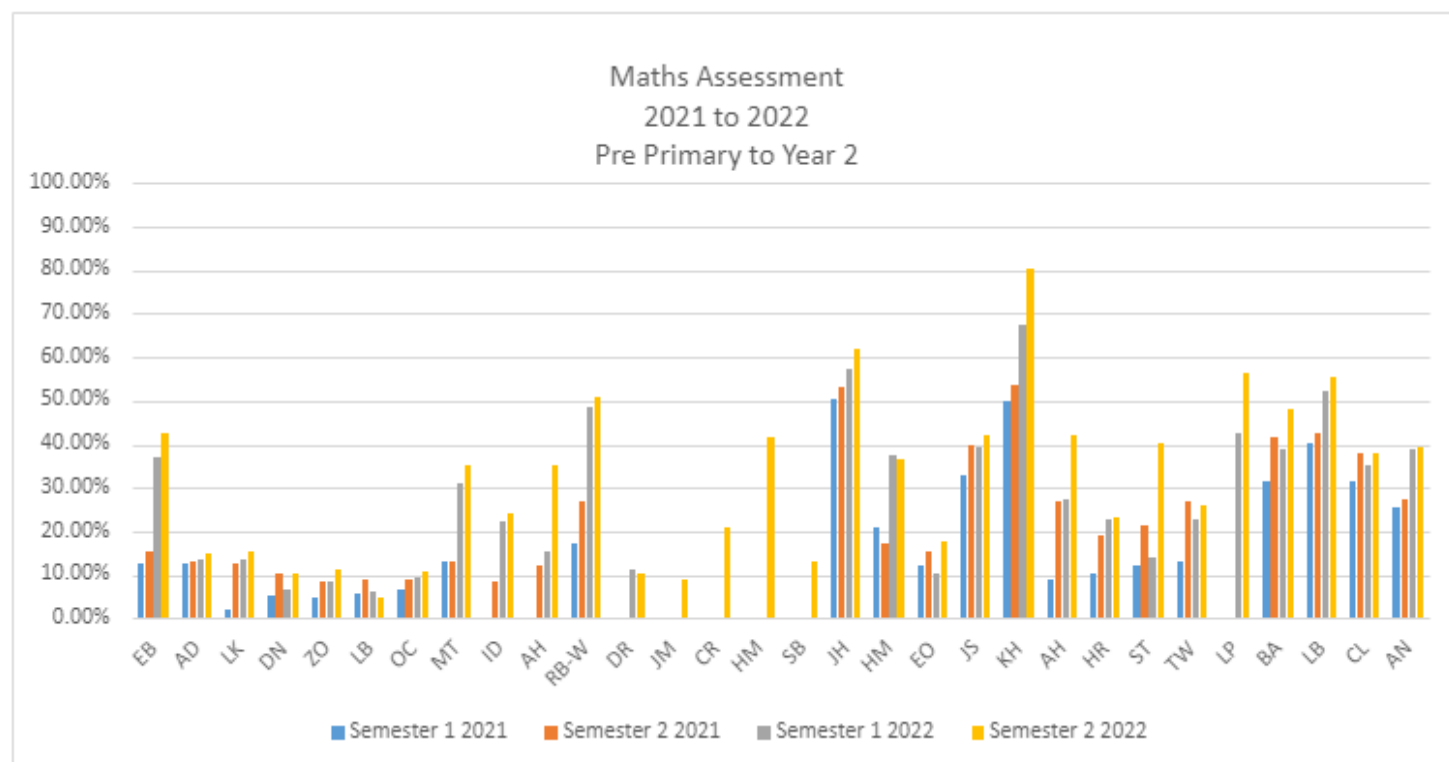
Students are assessed to identify their starting point in the Letters and Sounds program. Explicit teaching within each phase, according to the whole school Literacy plan, provides the child with the skills to move into subsequent phases over time. Results show considerable progress for some individuals over the years. The majority of students have made steady, or incremental, gains across the Letters and Sounds phases. During 2022 97.7% of junior students (K-Yr 2) and 97.4% of senior students (Yr 3-6) have shown progress from Semester 1 to Semester 2. Overall, 97.6% of all students have made gains in their Letters and Sounds knowledge which meets our desired target. The data confirms our confidence that the Letters and Sounds program is appropriate and an effective strategy in developing literacy skills. 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.



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. 95.3% of junior students (K-Yr 2) have made gains against their individual level of understanding of numeracy skills while 81.6% of senior students (Yr 3-6) have shown steady progress over the year. Overall 88.45% of all students have made gains in Numeracy in 2022. 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 the planning and teaching of the number strand, and to develop meaningful IEP goals.

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, plus the introduction of Origo Maths assessments.

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. There are plans to further 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 2022 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, in 2021 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. In 2022, teaching staff incorporated Talk4Writing into the literacy program with positive gains and increased interest from the students who were more engaged in their learning. The English Curriculum leader and committee met regularly to discuss options to enhance the whole school plan.

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. This also allowed staff to identify a small group of students who were chosen to participate in Origo Maths to extend their skills and knowledge. Student feedback was positive and staff observed improved engagement. For the students whose data was inconsistent, this could be justified due to medical, or substantial absences throughout the year.



Academic Targets and Non-Academic Targets

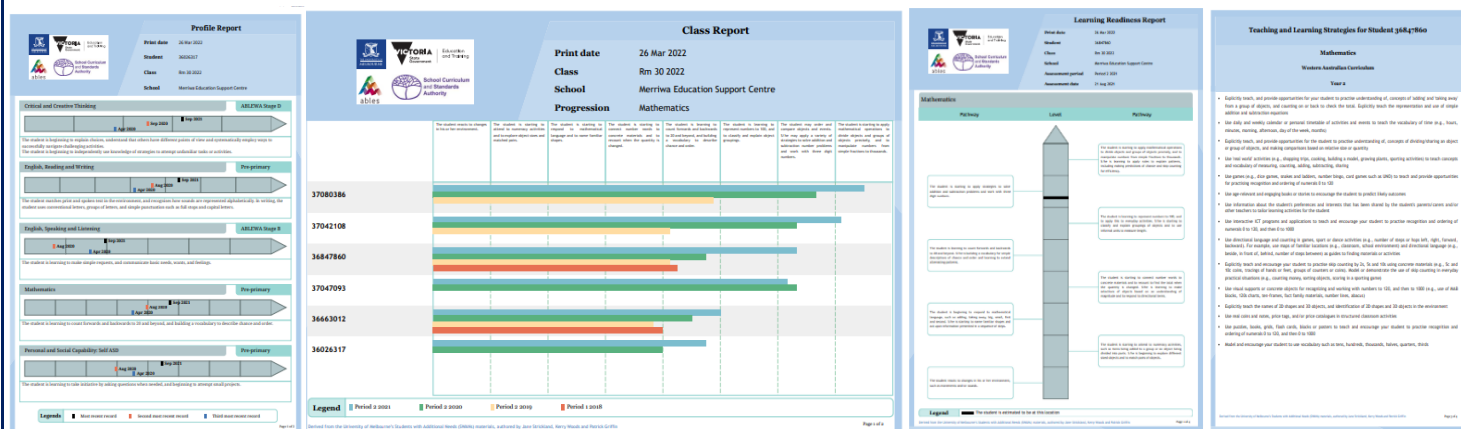
- A larger percentage of students demonstrated improvements in individual literacy, numeracy and communication goals, and steady progress across the years.
- Incremental achievement is evident through comparison of student IEP goals and subsequent progress over the year.
- The Abilities Based Learning 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.
- Overall positive feedback from staff, students and parents/carers in community surveys (2022) 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.

The ABLEWA platform produces 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> Overall 97.6% achievement in Letters and Sounds and 88.5% achievement in Maths Number knowledge. | <i>Achieved. 83% overall progress</i> A small percentage of students remained constant or showed some regression in one or more of the ABLEWA domains. | <i>Not achieved.</i> 75% of students achieved higher than 75% of their IEP goals. A 9% improvement from 2021 |
| 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>Not Achieved.</i> Average range from 75% -100% satisfaction rating across the community in the 2022 Survey. | <i>Not achieved.</i> 76.6% of students achieved an attendance rate between 80% to 100% | <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- 2022

Parents and Carers Response

From the 28 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. It is apparent that parents have felt isolated from the school community due to the restrictions imposed during the pandemic. Three parents have expressed their dissatisfaction on various aspects throughout the survey.

Staff have analysed the data to ensure these areas of concern are better addressed across the school to meet the expectations of our community. 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 2024.

75% to 90% high satisfaction rating.

86% agree that their child likes being at school and feels safe at MESC.

93% agree they can talk to the staff in their child's room about any concerns.

89% agree that MESC is well led and would recommend our school to others.

89% agree that the teachers are good and that staff care about their child



MESC Staff Survey Responses

From a staff of 60 teachers and education assistants, 43 responded to the survey in September, 2022. 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.

84% 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 I learn new things and have fun in my class.*
- *My teachers care about me and help me learn.*
- *I am so grateful for the amazing efforts put towards my son's education and acceptance. MESC has an AMAZING team of thoughtful, caring teachers/EA's and I trust that my son is in great hands when I drop him off everyday. I can't thank them all enough!*
- *I think you are all doing a wonderful job and any problems are always taken seriously. We feel very valued.*
- *We love MESC. The teachers are caring, educated and trained and so helpful, always.*
- *Amazing leadership at MESC, staff are kept in the loop and informed of changes.*
- *I love working at MESC and feel very proud to be a part of the team here.*
- *The well-being of staff and students has been paramount at MESC. Leadership has ensured needs are met, listened to concerns, suggestions etc. and acted in the best interest of all stakeholders. What an amazing place to work!*



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2022 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.
- 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.



SPECIAL EVENTS

Despite the ongoing implications of Covid-19 and the restrictions imposed on the community, we were able to enjoy some special activities listed below:

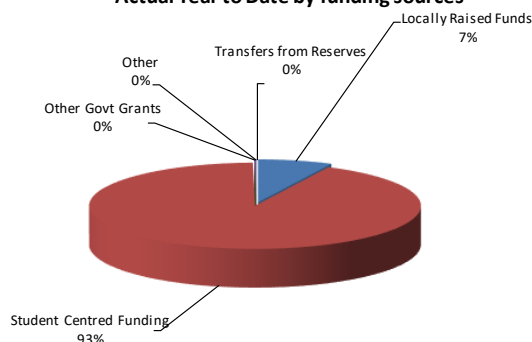
- Year 6 Day Camp Activities and Beach swimming
- Pool swimming lessons for PrePrimary to Year 5 students
- Book Week – Character Parade
- Principal's Afternoon Tea reward events
- Lego Robotics Competition – Inaugural champion team
- Special Olympics and Inclusive sports sessions
- Teddy Bear Picnic, family fun afternoon
- Community Access Programs and excursions
- NAIDOC Celebrations
- P&C Colour run and Silly Socks day
- Year 6 Graduation Ceremony
- Social Dance Lessons
- Whole School Christmas Concert
- Book Award assembly to recognise student achievement



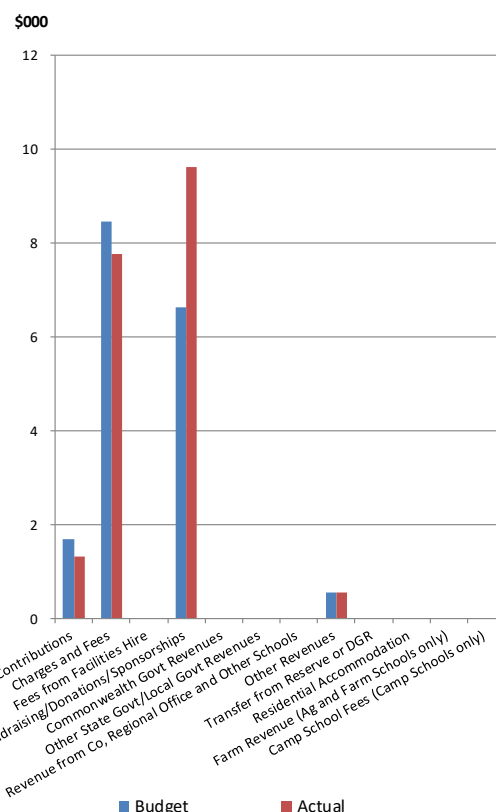
FINANCIAL STATEMENT

| | Revenue - Cash & Salary Allocation | Budget | Actual |
|----|--|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1 | Voluntary Contributions | \$ 1,694.00 | \$ 1,310.00 |
| 2 | Charges and Fees | \$ 8,470.00 | \$ 7,758.76 |
| 3 | Fees from Facilities Hire | \$ - | \$ - |
| 4 | Fundraising/Donations/Sponsorships | \$ 6,620.00 | \$ 9,620.00 |
| 5 | Commonwealth Govt Revenues | \$ - | \$ - |
| 6 | Other State Govt/Local Govt Revenues | \$ - | \$ - |
| 7 | Revenue from Co, Regional Office and Other Schools | \$ - | \$ - |
| 8 | Other Revenues | \$ 540.00 | \$ 540.54 |
| 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 | \$ 17,324.00 | \$ 19,229.30 |
| | Opening Balance | \$ 521.00 | \$ 521.52 |
| | Student Centred Funding | \$ 236,473.00 | \$ 236,472.63 |
| | Total Cash Funds Available | \$ 254,318.00 | \$ 256,223.45 |
| | Total Salary Allocation | \$ - | \$ - |
| | Total Funds Available | \$ 254,318.00 | \$ 256,223.45 |

Actual Year to Date by funding sources

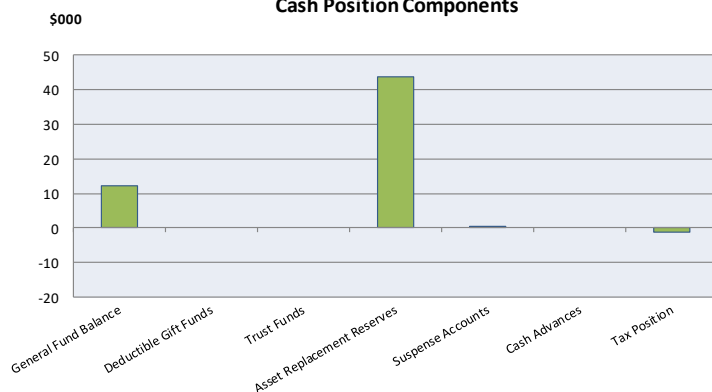


Locally Raised Revenue - Budget vs Actual

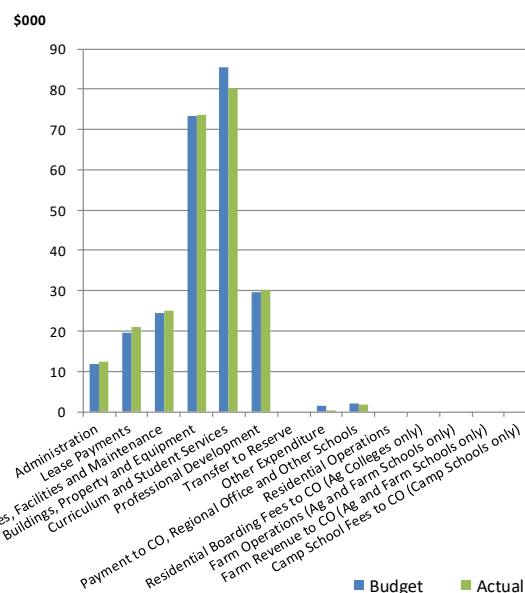


| | Expenditure - Cash and Salary | Budget | Actual |
|----|--|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1 | Administration | \$ 11,835.00 | \$ 12,261.62 |
| 2 | Lease Payments | \$ 19,474.00 | \$ 21,118.58 |
| 3 | Utilities, Facilities and Maintenance | \$ 24,376.00 | \$ 25,085.34 |
| 4 | Buildings, Property and Equipment | \$ 73,304.00 | \$ 73,497.67 |
| 5 | Curriculum and Student Services | \$ 85,419.00 | \$ 80,111.02 |
| 6 | Professional Development | \$ 29,641.00 | \$ 30,200.50 |
| 7 | Transfer to Reserve | \$ - | \$ - |
| 8 | Other Expenditure | \$ 1,470.00 | \$ 2.89 |
| 9 | Payment to CO, Regional Office and Other Schools | \$ 2,100.00 | \$ 1,654.94 |
| 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 | \$ 247,619.00 | \$ 243,932.56 |
| | Total Forecast Salary Expenditure | \$ - | \$ - |
| | Total Expenditure | \$ 247,619.00 | \$ 243,932.56 |
| | Cash Budget Variance | \$ 6,699.00 | |

Cash Position Components



Goods and Services Expenditure - Budget vs Actual



Cash Position Components

| | |
|------------------------------|---------------------|
| Bank Balance | \$ 55,087.17 |
| Made up of: | |
| 1 General Fund Balance | \$ 12,290.89 |
| 2 Deductible Gift Funds | \$ - |
| 3 Trust Funds | \$ - |
| 4 Asset Replacement Reserves | \$ 43,523.33 |
| 5 Suspense Accounts | \$ 547.95 |
| 6 Cash Advances | \$ - |
| 7 Tax Position | \$ (1,275.00) |
| Total Bank Balance | \$ 55,087.17 |

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 Therapy Focus- Speech Therapist, Physiotherapist and Occupational Therapist; Ability Centre, Rocky Bay, 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 Kites, 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.



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.



Foodbank
An Australia Without Hunger



PARENT, STAFF AND STUDENT STATEMENTS



"The well-being of staff and students has been paramount at MESC. Leadership has ensured needs are met, listened to concerns and suggestions, and acted in the best interests of all stakeholders. What an amazing place to work!"

"Great opportunities for our new graduates to be mentored and coached, and supported in their new roles at Merriwa ESC. Students have access to a range of programs to suit their learning needs."

"I love working at MESC and feel very proud to be a part of the team here."

"Thank you for everything you have done for me both professionally and personally over the past 3 years at MESC. I cannot thank you enough for helping me grow into the teacher I am becoming and showing me how truly special Ed Support can be. I am forever grateful for your support."

Staff

"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."

"It was an absolute pleasure working with such amazing staff, I even learnt a lot from my observations. Keep up the great work!"

"Thanks so much for all your amazing support for this family through some very difficult times. You are amazing!"

"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."

Therapists

"Merriwa ESC has gone above and beyond for my son. I was originally very scared to put him into schooling but they have made exceptional progress, he loves coming to school. The atmosphere and community feel is amazing and we look forward to the rest of our school journey at Merriwa ESC."

"MESC staff are compassionate and they really cater to every child's needs. MESC staff are well trained to work with children with special needs. Well recommended."

"We love Merriwa ESC. The teachers are caring, educated and trained, and always so helpful."

"MESC staff have been amazing with my daughter. They have found ways for her to still be included and involved when she is physically unable to complete tasks like her peers. They have brought up concerns immediately with me, asked me questions to help my daughter enjoy her days at school better and have always been warm and welcoming. My daughter loves school. MESC staff have made me feel comfortable leaving my daughter at school to make friends and learn new things."

"Best decision I made, switching to MESC. My son loves going to school and I don't have any worries leaving him with his teacher and support staff – he adores them."

Parents and Carers



MERRIWA
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