

2022 Annual Report to the School Community

School Name: Doncaster Primary School (0197)



- All teachers at the school meet the registration requirements of the Victorian Institute of Teaching (www.vit.vic.edu.au).
- The school meets prescribed minimum standards for registration as regulated by the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) in accordance with the Education and Training Reform (ETR) Act 2006. This includes schools granted an exemption by the VRQA until 31 December of the previous calendar year from the minimum standards for student enrolment numbers and/or curriculum framework for school language program.
- The school is compliant with the Child Safe Standards prescribed in Ministerial Order No. 870 – Child Safe Standards, Managing Risk of Child Abuse in School.

- This 2022 Annual Report to the School Community has been tabled and endorsed at a meeting of the school council and will be publicly shared with the school community

About Our School

School context

Doncaster Primary School (DPS) has been proudly educating the Doncaster Community for over 157 years, and we offer quality education by having high expectations of all students. At DPS, we achieve high individual growth by utilising data to inform teaching and learning. Students learn in a safe, vibrant and caring environment that promotes acceptance, confidence, curiosity and respect, in line with our guiding values of Determination, Pride and Success. Our values cultivate positive interactions and expectations for one another; this includes teachers, students, and parents and provides a common language understood by the community. The school has a standard for high academic performance and achievement whilst promoting ethical behaviour, personal and social competence, critical and creative thinking, and intercultural understanding. The skills, behaviours and attributes developed will equip students for success in life and work in the 21st Century. We believe in developing the whole child. To that end, our highly experienced teachers coordinate a wide range of extracurricular activities and events to complement the teaching and learning of our students. Doncaster Primary School's stellar reputation ensures that we are a highly sought after school among international students. We only accept students that meet DET policy criteria and guidelines to ensure that international students are given optimal opportunities for immersion into our school community.

Parents and carers are welcomed as partners in the school community and are involved in decision-making activities through parent associations, committees, and school councils. The school implements strategies and processes to encourage and empower parents and carers to communicate and engage with the school. We regularly communicate opportunities for parent engagement and articulate the benefits of parents as partners for student learning and well-being. Our staff work in a close partnership with our parents through School Council, Class Representatives, Volunteers and Helpers, Student Conferences and Student Presentations and Information Evenings. The school harnesses the capacity of community partners to collectively meet the diversity of its student needs by accessing such things as expertise, professional development and delivery of activities and services. Partnerships are monitored and reviewed to measure their effectiveness. The school and its partners co-design learning experiences that have mutual benefit. For example, we have a close partnership with the Doncaster Uniting Church which give us 12 Kids Hope Mentors that work one to one with students who may be at risk. Within this context, school leaders and teachers are committed to implementing a consistent whole-school approach to learning and instructional model that is underpinned by explicit teaching and a differentiated curriculum. We acknowledge and cater to different rates and learning styles whilst building consistency of practice across the school through collaborative team planning and reflection, professional learning walks, peer observation within and beyond DPS, and individual and cohort data to inform differentiated lessons and student learning goals. We are committed to continuing the school's tradition of providing educational excellence for all.

DPS has a long and rich history, dating back to 1863. Located in the City of Manningham and the heart of Doncaster Hill, it occupies the 2.63-hectare site with state-of-the-art facilities. The 443 children are representative of a wide range of cultural backgrounds, with a high proportion of children from Language Backgrounds Other Than English. We also have International Students that are part of our school community. The school's overall economic profile is based on the school's Student Family Occupation and Education Index (SFOE), which considers parents' occupations and education. Doncaster Primary School's socio-educational band value is 'Low', representing a low socio-educational disadvantage. Our school has 31.1 equivalent full-time staff: 2.0 Principal class, 24.2 teachers and 4.8 Education Support Staff. DPS is an attractive school with beautifully cultivated gardens that ensure a safe learning and playing environment. Our students are fortunate to have vast areas to play, with expansive grounds that include a full-sized oval with soccer nets, cricket pitch, long jump, sandpit and two playgrounds. In addition, students can enjoy playing sports on our basketball and volleyball courts or enjoying some shade in our seated areas dotted around the school. Our sustainability garden and chickens keep the children connected to nature. Children are engaged and challenged in wonderfully bright and stimulating learning areas with classes led by teams of high calibre teaching professionals. Our classrooms and teaching spaces are modern, large, well-equipped, and well-resourced. We have dedicated rooms including Visual Arts, ICT, LOTE, Cultural Studies and Library. The school also has a full-sized gymnasium for indoor Physical Education classes. Experienced staff run engaging programs in each area and offer our students a range of extracurricular opportunities. Additional program areas include sport (swimming, cross country, athletics, gymnastics, team competition); camps including our Grade 6 Camp to Canberra and excursions; cultural activities; music and performance (school productions, concerts, choirs, instrumental tuition); Values / Resilience programs; Respectful Relationships, TEAM and UBUNTU. The Tutor Learning Initiative (TLI) has continued to 'catch' students who may have fallen behind in reading and numeracy due to the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 and remote learning periods. Our TLI program has ensured success for our students due to our exceptionally high standards around the implementation of the program and thoroughly developed practice principles, and most importantly, the dedication and professionalism of our teachers. Doncaster

Primary School's leadership team is always striving to improve. As such, we take pride in our forward-thinking and goal-driven approach to everything we do for the benefit of the students.

Progress towards strategic goals, student outcomes and student engagement

Learning

At Doncaster PS we pride ourselves on having high expectations for learning. Our motto 'Aiming High' is embedded in our school culture and students are well supported to extend themselves in all aspects of their schooling. In 2022, over 95% of our students were working at or above age expected standards in English and Mathematics as assessed against the Victorian Curriculum. Our highly experienced teachers work collaboratively to plan effective lessons and learning tasks to meet the needs of all students to maximise learning growth. A range of assessments are used across the school to inform students' mastery levels. Teachers monitor learning and provide students the opportunity to engage in relevant learning tasks that promote further development. All teachers follow our instructional model in Literacy and Numeracy to ensure consistency. Teachers continually reflect on their teaching practices and refine techniques to align with the latest evidenced based teaching methods. High ability students are extended through the Victorian High Abilities Program which consists of ten-week online courses in Mathematics and English for primary aged student in levels 5 & 6. Students engage in synchronous Webex classes with their teachers. They can also engage with the course material on VSV Online outside of the class time. Selected students at Doncaster have enjoyed participating in this departmental initiative. We are also very proud to offer eligible students from levels 3-6 the opportunity to participate in our in-house high abilities program called EVEREST. Students are extended through a range of experiences throughout the year culminating with students sitting the International School Assessment exam. We are extremely proud of the 45 students who participated in the program in 2022 for achieving a minimum of two years above the expected level on the ISA exam. The Tutor Learning Initiative provides support for identified students who may have fallen behind in their learning due to COVID 19 lockdowns and remote learning. Our program has successfully supported students with building momentum in their learning through explicit teaching and effective assessment practices. Teachers use Individual Learning Plans as needed to record student learning goals in Literacy and Numeracy. Student progress is monitored and measured twice a term to ensure that students are experiencing growth in their learning.

Impressively, 89% and 85% of our year 3 and 5 students respectively are in the top three bands in Naplan Reading which exceeds similar schools' data. In Naplan Numeracy, we had %78 and %80 of our year 3 and 5 students in the top three bands. We had excellent benchmark growth data in Numeracy with 50% our students experiencing high growth for the last 3 years.

Wellbeing

Student wellbeing is the cornerstone of connected and meaningful learning. At Doncaster PS we believe in educating the whole child and are highly attuned to the wellbeing needs of all our students and we believe that student engagement is the gatekeeper to mental readiness during the teaching-learning process. Student wellbeing was prioritised in 2022 in line with our Annual Implementation which focused on effectively mobilising available resources to support students' wellbeing and mental health. We achieved this goal by building staff capacity to notice and respond to signs of student distress and emerging mental illness through professional development. Staff engaged in professional learning on anxiety and creating the conditions in the classroom to support students with self-regulation. Additionally, the assistant principal, who leads student welfare and wellbeing, worked with other schools in our network via the Communities of Practice initiative to share best practices with supporting student wellbeing across the continuum of needs and engaged in professional learning which was then shared with our staff. Teachers were offered the latest research and strategies to equip them with the knowledge and skills to support and empower students to be mindful of their own wellbeing and the wellbeing of others. We worked closely with teachers to identify students who require additional support and made referrals to Student Support Services where appropriate. We are very proud of how well our students live our school values of Determination, Pride and Success in everything they do. We have a strong culture of respect and are proud of how we teach children the dispositions and character traits to be upstanding citizens in our school and in the broader community. In addition, we strengthened in-class relationships through peer and group learning activities via our UBUNTU cross-age wellbeing program, where students can build connections with other students and teachers and engage in team-building activities that promote our school

values. At the start of the year, students connected with their classmates and teachers as part of the TEAM (Together Everyone Achieves More) program at DPS, where students engage in several 'get to know you activities'. Students also co-constructed classroom behavioural and learning expectations with their teachers and created posters to reinforce the expected behaviour. In this way, students are clear about what is expected, ensuring everyone has a shared understanding and signifying that wellbeing and student safety are strongly prioritised at our school. Our Attitudes to School Survey Data for students in years 4 to 6 demonstrates that %83.6 of our students feel a strong sense of connectedness on this survey factor which exceed similar school data. Similarly, the survey factor of 'managing bullying' was positively endorsed by %83 students also exceeding the percentage of similar schools. Vulnerable students had access to Kids Hope Mentors and this program was very successful in 2022. Throughout the year teachers develop behaviour goals to support individual students. Goals are recorded in Individual Learning Plans and teachers met with parents in student support group meetings to monitor and discuss student progress. This highly individualised approach ensures that student wellbeing needs are being specifically addressed and tailored to the individual thereby ensuring the high standards we have for a calm and orderly classroom setting. The Respectful Relationships curriculum provided a whole school approach to respect and equality which projected a school wide expectation for respect across our community. Additionally, we implemented bullying prevention and cyber safety programs such as the e-Smart school's framework to ensure that students broaden their understanding of safety in cyber spaces. Finally, we worked with families to foster a strong partnership and to reinforce a common language and approach to cyber safety between home and school.

Engagement

We are extremely proud of the high level of student engagement in our learning community. This is evident to anyone who visits the school and is highly visible in all classrooms. Doncaster Primary school students are friendly, welcoming and inclusive. Teachers are committed to creating the optimal learning environment for students to thrive in by creating engaging learning experiences that challenge and stretch all students. The school values of Determination, Pride and Success are explicitly taught, and we have high standards around respectful behaviour at all times. On the back of state-wide lockdowns and disruptive learning in 2020 and 2021, we were highly focused on monitoring student attendance levels and promoting student engagement in 2022. We developed expectations and protocols across the school around teachers connecting with parents and following up on student absences. For example, office staff would follow up with families where students were absent without explanation and parents/carers would be contacted by the classroom teacher for any student who was absent for more than three days in order to check in and provide support. In addition, the principal team carefully monitored chronic student absenteeism data. Moreover, the principal team promoted a clear message to the school community highlighting the importance of students attending school consistently and reinforcing the message of it is 'not okay to be away.' via newsfeeds, assemblies and the newsletter articles. Where needed, the principal and assistant principal worked with families to establish student engagement plans with clear goals and strategies to reengage students with school life. In addition, the school provided resources to cater to a few students struggling to engage with school and onsite learning through the Peaceful Kids Program. This program was a huge success, and we are pleased to report that all students have fully reengaged with school life and the community. Our absence data for 2022, measured by the average number of days absent was below similar school and state school average. Our mantra, Care, Connection and Commitment, signalled to families that we have a culture dedicated to ensuring that all students and their families are connected to our school and that we place a high value on student engagement. As part of our professional learning schedule, we provided teachers with information and research on how to differentiate lessons and create a highly engaging teaching environment. We focused on ways that students could have more agency over their learning and use their student voice. We provided students with opportunities to build leadership skills and take up roles of leadership within the school. The Junior School Council provided younger students a platform for student voice and to influence school decisions. We provided families with the opportunity to be involved with the school through our parent helpers program. Parents gained knowledge about their child's education and best practices in teaching and learning through parent information forums. Our student led conferences provided families with valuable insight into their child's learning progress and showcased our approach for students taking responsibility of their own learning. We developed a calendar of whole school events that promoted high levels of parent and student engagement, for example, Education Week activities which included Open Classrooms, Year Level Movie afternoons, Whole School ART Show, and Bushwazee Dance Performance provided high levels of parent participation. In addition, we engaged with our local community to provide unique and engaging learning opportunities for students. For example, the grade 6 students visited council chambers and met the mayor of Manningham.

Financial performance

The school continues to be in a sound financial situation due to excellent financial management, targeted expenditure against school wide priorities and strategic planning. The core revenue was generated via the Student Resource Package and Government grants consisting of a cash component and financial support for the Tutor Learning Initiative. Equity Funding was used to ensure that all students are given equal access to all learning opportunities, camps, incursions and excursions. Equity Funding was also used to support vulnerable students with wellbeing supports. Contractually, the school continues to work with hirers OSHC Extend, KT Tutoring, and Arab School. Additionally, funds have been retained to undertake major projects in 2023 ICT Server, Teacher IPADS, resurfacing of Basketball Crts, Art Room Render, PE Shed, Carpet, Toilet floor.