

2021 Annual Report to The School Community



School Name: Brunswick East Primary School (3179)



- 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 2021 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.

«PrincipalSignDescription»

- This 2021 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

«PresidentSignDescription»

About Our School

School context

Brunswick East Primary School (BEPS) is located about 6 kilometres North of the Melbourne Central Business District. The enrolment of 412 students is drawn from a medium to high socio-economic profile with a low socio-educational disadvantage profile. In general, our parents and carers are well educated and employed in a range of academic, professional, and creative jobs. Many of our families live in apartments or in houses on small blocks. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown impacted many of our families and hence the enrolment in 2021 was significantly lower than in 2020 and 2019, with many families moving out of the inner suburbs and opting for larger houses to live in, or a rural/beachside residence. Unfortunately, 2021 resulted in few international students.

At BEPS, we pride ourselves on the inclusive nature of our school and community. We learn with our friends and strive to build relationships between students and with staff. We want all students to know that they can learn, that they learn differently, and that growth, rather than a score, is most important. We welcome all families to our school.

Children at all levels learn onsite, through targeted inquiry, explicit teaching, active participation, and philosophical discussion. Online education focused on student participation in explicit teaching, student interest, and maintaining healthy activities.

BEPS has 30.6 equivalent full-time staff, 2 Principal class and 23 teachers, 1 Business Manager, plus 4.6 Education Support Staff. We have no staff who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders. All staff have a high level of commitment to the students' emotional development; academic growth; and professional learning, which revolves around current research, and best practice. There is continued positive satisfaction in the school from the parents and staff who endorse the school climate.

Our parent community is very supportive, and our success depends on our strong partnership with parents, carers, and the community. In 2021, we had a strong focus on Numeracy and this was led by the Maths coordinator.

We provide information to our families on a regular basis and encourage them all to engage with the school so as to improve students' learning, through participation in online sessions, newsletters, phone calls, 3-way conferences, information forums, and 1:1 Webex meetings as necessary.

We have high expectations of staff and students across all aspects of schooling, and we encourage students to build resilience, learn from ongoing attempts to solve problems, and develop mastery skills.

Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO)

In 2021, BEPS Annual Implementation Plan focused on the implementation of Key Improvement Strategies related to the FISO dimensions of Building Practice Excellence, Curriculum Planning and Assessment, and Building Leadership Teams. This included:

- Improving the learning growth of every student.
- Improving curiosity, challenge, creativity, and critical thinking in students' learning
- Empowering students to be resilient, engaged, and motivated learners
- Making happy, active, and healthy kids a priority

To do this we have continued to improve teacher knowledge of mathematical teaching, through participation in professional Learning run, over two years, by Mathematical Teachers Victoria, and the Professional Learning Communities initiative, run by DET, Northwest Region Victoria.

The focus of the year was on supporting students and their families to maintain a positive focus throughout the

pandemic, provide explicit and targeted learning for all students in Literacy and Numeracy, and help to develop happy, healthy, resilient students.

The Tutor Learning Initiative supported teachers to work with very small groups of students on a targeted goal. These groups ran for approximately 5 weeks and provided ongoing feedback on student progress.

The application of technology to support student learning continued in 2021 through online learning and the development of Digital Learning Journals. These journals focused on student growth and enabled older students to show improved engagement with their learning, show pride in what they had achieved and the growth they had made, and allowed them to speak confidently about their learning at the 3 – way conferences with their parents/carers.

Achievement

In 2021, Teacher assessment and external testing showed that students at BEPS received a high-quality education that empowers them to think and prepares them for meaningful and responsible involvement within a variety of communities.

During remote learning, staff were able to utilise online resources for content delivery and assessment and consequently develop new ways of differentiating learning for students. The development of online resources contributed to staff collegiality at a time when face-to-face meetings were not used and many staff were teaching from home.

Our results show that 94.1% and 95.6% of students in Prep to Grade 6, achieved age-expected standards in English and Mathematics respectively. Well above the state average and in line with results from students in schools with a similar socioeconomic background.

It is pleasing to see that our 4-year trend data for reading in Year 3 and Year 5 remains well above the state average and slightly higher than that of students at similar schools. The results for numeracy show that while being above the state average, our Year 3 and Year 5 students performed lower than like schools for 2021.

In 2021 we applied to have a number of our students supported through the Program for Students with a Disability. A number of these applications were successful and this will help us to support students with a disability to achieve their individual learning goals, in 2022.

Engagement

Brunswick East Primary School has a friendly and positive school culture. Students, families, the local community, and staff work together to create challenging and engaging opportunities for students to learn and grow.

BEPS has multi-age, flexible learning spaces for years 1-6. This ensures learning spaces that can best cater to the specific learning taking place. This flexibility allows for, inquiry-based programs that encourage students to have high expectations and enable them to learn and develop positive attitudes towards themselves and their learning. Most students connected strongly with the opportunities provided during the remote learning period. For some, it enabled them to research topics and questions that were of relevance to them or play online games with friends. However, there were several students who found the online experience isolating, and stressful. Teachers had to develop a variety of strategies to ensure that students were present at the sessions and documentation, of submitted learning samples, was a critical step. The families of the students who could not be confirmed as present online were contacted individually by classroom assistants, teachers, and the Principal to develop 1:1 sessions, sessions with a parent/carer as well, or with a very small group of students (2-4 students)

To support student engagement during the transition back to onsite learning, our school engaged 'I Can' to run two sessions a week for students who had withdrawn from the group during online learning or showed high levels of anxiety. This will continue in 2022.

Attendance at BEPS is highly valued because we know that regular attendance is important for ongoing student improvement.

We have continued to have high numbers of students attend regularly and consistently (90%) but this figure is lower than usual. The reasons for non-attendance are almost entirely illness and family fear of the impact of COVID on vulnerable family members. Throughout the year we worked to support the students in these families by providing online learning activities that they could choose from, as well as maintaining regular contact with the families.

Wellbeing

Through our culture of inquiry and reflection and the core values of Empathy, Creativity, Friendship, Resilience, and Wonder, children develop positive attitudes and acquire skills that equip them for their future.

The multi-age model continues to ensure a positive whole school culture of mutual respect through peer tutoring and communal responsibility.

The school maintains a consistent approach to well-being through the core beliefs that all students have the right to learn and the right to be safe. Students generally feel supported by their teachers in safe and stimulating learning environments.

Hence, the well-being results for 2021 are disappointing and show that approximately 35% of students in Years 4 to 6 do not feel connected to BEPS and do not endorse our management of bullying at the school. In situations where the bullying occurred online, the forums were not linked to the student's learning and were out of sight from their parents/carers, and the remote nature of the learning did not support speaking to students and working through the issues as we would when onsite. Respectful relationships and E-safety will be part of the curriculum in 2022.

Finance performance and position

Brunswick East Primary School continues to be in a strong financial position with surplus funds because of fundraising and responsible spending. In 2021 we initially budgeted for more students on site, and the reduction in student numbers due to COVID resulted in a deficit.

Teacher-student ratios were low. We had, 1 teacher to 17 students in prep, and roughly 1 teacher to 22 students across Grades 1 to 6, to ensure that students were provided with time and support from staff, to maintain sufficient planning time for teams, and we employed extra classroom assistants where necessary. An additional Classroom Assistant was employed to support the Prep students in 2021 and a 0.2 ICT assistant was employed to assist with the rebuilding of the school ICT network and maintenance of school devices. Funding was also made available to improve digital hardware and software.

Money was spent frugally in 2021 to reduce the deficit and loss of our major fundraising event, the 'Twilight Market'. Grants were applied for and accepted to provide for an upgrade to the external student toilet block, construction of a shade sail, and improvement of the school's solar panel array. All of these projects will be done in 2022.

For more detailed information regarding our school please visit our website at
<https://beps.vic.edu.au/>