

# 2021 Annual Report to The School Community



**School Name: Merino Consolidated School (6237)**



- All teachers at the school meet the registration requirements of the Victorian Institute of Teaching ([www.vit.vic.edu.au](http://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.

Attested on 20 March 2022 at 06:32 PM by Genevieve Hulin (Principal)

- All teachers employed or engaged by the school council meet the registration requirements of the Victorian Institute of Teaching.
- To the extent that the school council is responsible, 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.
- To the extent that the school council is responsible, 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.

Attested on 23 March 2022 at 08:27 AM by Shaun Fidler (School Council President)

# How to read the Annual Report

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## What does the 'About Our School' commentary section of this report refer to?

The 'About our school' commentary provides a brief background on the school, an outline of the school's performance over the year and future directions.

The 'School Context' describes the school's vision, values and purpose. Details include the school's geographic location, size and structure, social characteristics, enrolment characteristics and special programs.

The 'Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO)' section includes the improvement initiatives the school has selected and the progress they have made towards achieving them through the implementation of their School Strategic Plan and Annual Implementation Plan.

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## What does the 'Performance Summary' section of this report refer to?

The Performance Summary includes the following:

### School Profile

- student enrolment information
- the school's 'Student Family Occupation and Education' category
- a summary of parent responses in the Parent Opinion Survey, shown against the statewide average for Primary schools
- school staff responses in the area of School Climate in the School Staff Survey, shown against the statewide average for Primary schools

### Achievement

- English and Mathematics for Teacher Judgements against the curriculum
- English and Mathematics for National Literacy and Numeracy tests (NAPLAN).

### Engagement

Student attendance at school

### Wellbeing

Student responses to two areas in the Student Attitudes to School Survey:

- Sense of Connectedness
- Management of Bullying

Results are displayed for the latest year and the average of the last four years (where available). As NAPLAN tests were not conducted in 2020, the NAPLAN 4-year average is the average of 2018, 2019 and 2021 data in the 2021 Performance Summary.

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## Considering COVID-19 when interpreting the Performance Summary

The Victorian community's experience of COVID-19, including remote and flexible learning, had a significant impact on normal school operations in 2020 and 2021. This impacted the conduct of assessments and surveys. Readers should be aware of this when interpreting the Performance Summary.

For example, in 2020 and 2021 school-based surveys ran under changed circumstances, and NAPLAN was not conducted in 2020. Absence and attendance data during this period may have been influenced by local processes and procedures adopted in response to remote and flexible learning.

Schools should keep this in mind when using this data for planning and evaluation purposes.

## How to read the Annual Report (continued)

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### What do 'Similar Schools' refer to?

Similar Schools are a group of Victorian government schools with similar characteristics to the school.

This grouping of schools has been created by comparing each school's socio-economic background of students, the number of non-English speaking students and the school's size and location.

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### What does 'NDP' or 'NDA' mean?

'NDP' refers to no data being published for privacy reasons or where there are insufficient underlying data. For example, very low numbers of participants or characteristics that may lead to identification will result in an 'NDP' label.

'NDA' refers to no data being available. Some schools have no data for particular measures due to low enrolments. There may be no students enrolled in some year levels, so school comparisons are not possible.

Note that new schools only have the latest year of data and no comparative data from previous years. The Department also recognises unique circumstances in Specialist, Select Entry, English Language, Community Schools and schools that changed school type recently, where school-to-school comparisons are not appropriate.

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### What is the 'Victorian Curriculum'?

The Victorian Curriculum F–10 sets out what every student should learn during his or her first eleven years of schooling. The curriculum is the common set of knowledge and skills required by students for life-long learning, social development and active and informed citizenship.

The Victorian Curriculum is assessed through teacher judgements of student achievement based on classroom learning.

The curriculum has been developed to ensure that school subjects and their achievement standards enable continuous learning for all students, including students with disabilities.

The 'Towards Foundation Level Victorian Curriculum' is integrated directly into the curriculum and is referred to as 'Levels A to D'.

'Levels A to D' may be used for students with disabilities or students who may have additional learning needs. These levels are not associated with any set age or year level that links chronological age to cognitive progress (i.e., there is no age expected standard of achievement for 'Levels A to D').

## About Our School

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### School context

Merino Consolidated School is located in the town of Merino. We have excellent facilities for a small number of students. Our facilities include; open learning spaces, 1 to 1 ipads and laptops, spacious grounds, school kitchen and garden, art room, nurture spaces, library, hall and a large undercover multipurpose area. Merino CS operates with a clear student centred focus. We strive to ensure that the students and their outcomes are at the forefront of all teaching and learning processes. We wholeheartedly believe that learning outcomes are maximised when children feel safe, connected and engaged at school. All students at Merino Consolidated School are encouraged to be active and self-directed in their learning

The school motto is "Where Everybody Is Somebody". At Merino CS, we foster our students' lifelong love for learning, encourage them to try new and exciting things, and give them a solid foundation to build on for learning later in life. We develop well rounded, confident and responsible individuals who aspire to achieve their full potential through providing a welcoming, happy, safe, and supportive learning environment in which everyone is equal and all achievements are celebrated. At Merino, we also believe that a happy child is a successful one, we are committed to providing a positive, safe and stimulating environment for children to learn and where all are valued. We intend that all children should enjoy their learning, achieve their potential and become independent life-long learners.

At Merino CS, we implement an extensive specialist program which includes: Performing Arts, Physical Education, MARC (Art and Library), Hands on Learning, Swimming and the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden classes. ICT is a strong feature with our curriculum, with the students having a 1:1 ratio of both laptops and iPads as well as access to 'spheros' (programmable robots) that are used in STEM classes. We have expanded our science curriculum in accordance with the Victorian Curriculum to include weekly STEM lessons, which allow us to observe outcomes not only in science, but also maths, and technology.

In 2021 we held a maximum enrolment of 8 students in Term 4. Our staff consists of 1.0 Teaching Principal and .78 ongoing Integration Aide

We are committed to maintaining a low teacher student ratio. Student progress is monitored regularly by adhering to the whole school assessment schedule and ongoing assessment strategies during teaching and learning time. At Merino Consolidated School, we work collaboratively with families to ensure that we have shared goals for their children. Every student has an individual learning program designed to meet their specific needs, these are updated once a term.

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### Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO)

Our focus in FISO continues to be on Excellence in Teaching and Learning. The Key Improvement Strategies of the school are focused on maximising learning progress for all students, building student agency and further enhancing our connected community to ensure all students have a sense wellbeing and belonging. These continued to be features of our work in 2021 and were more important than ever.

In the short periods, when we were back on campus, creating a sense of calm and orderly routine that supported students and staff to have a sense of wellbeing was the primary priority. The other focus was to identify any gaps in learning that may have occurred due to remote learning, this was done in a variety of ways, PAT Testing was also used and Merino CS joined the Assist COP.

A range of assessment strategies enabled us to address those as quickly this was made possible through the TLI program which allowed for extra interventions to take place.

Merino Consolidated School delivered on the school's Key Improvement Strategies as identified in the 2021 Annual

#### Implementation Plan:

- To continue to focus on improved reading outcomes for students with particular attention being paid to deep level reading comprehension
- To implement drafted writing scope and sequence enabling full data collection to provide evidence of students learning gains of best practice in Writing

During 2021, we modified our approach to the teaching of reading. There was a heavier focus on inferential comprehension and teaching towards a more individual approach to reading goals for each student. We continued the use of the Seven Steps for Writing (particularly in Narrative Writing) which saw outstanding student progress as judged by NAPLAN scores. Soundwaves was also continued to be implemented to great success, with all students making excellent progress with their reading and spelling skills for the year. Staff used PAT testing data and Essential Assessments in Mathematics for pre and post testing in mathematics to determine areas of need for student learning.

As a result of this we continue to be engaged in communities of practice to further enhance our writing teaching, we have continued to collect data and analyse this more regularly through weekly PLC meetings with Marnoo PS.

After the implementation of Junior School Council being hampered due to Covid-19, 2021 allowed us to begin regular meetings and students have enhanced through Junior School Council, Teacher/Student/Parent Interviews and conducting student surveys.

Positive Climate for Learning was another area of focus, we continued to develop a culture of high expectations and provided students, staff and parents with a safe and supportive learning environment

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## Achievement

The continuation of establishing and maintaining high expectations on student learning alongside high behaviour expectations. Having a low teacher/student ratio means that high individual attention can be given and a consistent approach can be given to all students. Staff continued to implement the Merino Consolidated instructional model for Literacy and Numeracy that focused on a gradual release model and reflective learning practices. Essential Assessment (online learning platform) was used as an assessment and teaching tool in the area of mathematics which allows for highly specific delivery of mathematics instruction. Due to being able to very specifically pinpoint gaps in the students learning all students demonstrated a high amount of growth across all learning areas. In Literacy, the '7 Steps of Writing' program was used to great effect in the teaching of writing - particularly around the genre of Narratives.

In 2021 we had no students in year 5 and 2 year 3 students eligible to sit NAPLAN test. Students performed at level for reading and numeracy. For Writing, both year 3 students achieved Band 6 which is a testament to the hard work in writing that was done over the course of 2020 and 2021

Teacher judgement data demonstrates a high percentage of students showing rapid improvement in their writing. Which has also been confirmed through external moderation with another 'like school'. The successful implementation on SoundWrite is demonstrated through the increased Fountas and Pinnell reading results with the majority of students reading well above their reading age

To maintain the momentum and remain focused on the School Strategic Plan in 2021 staff will continue to consolidate the work undertaken in 2020-2021 in Literacy. We aim to maintain the level of student achievement and performance across all learning areas.

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## Engagement

Student engagement is crucial to learning and personal development. The more engaged a pupil is, the more they engage with their lessons and what they are learning. Students at Merino CS and their individual needs are equally valued. Due to our low teacher to student ratio, all children are engaged with an individual learning focus tailored to their academic needs. Teaching is designed with each individual in mind. Merino CS places a high value on student autonomy and as such, learning provided is child-centred, rather than teacher-centred, boosting student engagement levels. Students are given individual freedom to make relevant choices and though and are supported to demonstrate responsible learning choices and are thus able to build autonomy and learn to make wise decisions. Cooperative learning is encouraged especially in our STEM and Topic lessons and equally in Kitchen/Garden lessons and Hands on Learning sessions.

The teaching Growth Mindset and resilience skills and strategies has a huge impact on student's self-confidence and the quality of their lives. Growth mindset strategies are explicitly taught and continuously modelled at all times. Students learn to embrace challenges and understand that failing at a task is part of the learning journey.

We continued to implement and embed School Wide Positive Behaviour (SWPB) and consolidated across the whole school cohort which operates on a clear set of behaviour expectations that are developed around our key school values. Students have ownership of their behaviour and feel safe and secure in the outcomes and expectations that are expected of them.

Students at Merino CS are encouraged to connect with the wider community around them. While this was difficult in 2020, in 2021 we were able to engage more than the previous year. In 2021 we were able to invite the local community knitting group to assist in the students in knitting scarves to take to the school camp to Mt Buller. The knitting ladies came once a week for a knitting session when restrictions allowed. Students also worked hard in Hands on Learning class making bird houses to sell at the community market and donate to local community groups in Merino.

In Term 2, Merino CS was successful in gaining an 'Artist in Residence' through being successfully chosen by Regional Art Victoria to take part. The student took part in weekly art sessions lead by a local artist covering a wide range of varying techniques cumulating in a community art show and a life size igloo from recycled milk bottles.

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## Wellbeing

Following the periods of Remote Learning that occurred throughout 2021, student well-being was a greater area of focus for Term 4. Merino CS continues to evolve its practices in the area of trauma brain based practice. The school combines the practices of a hybrid 'Berry St' model as well as best practices in Positive Education models of classroom in order to address the individual needs of the enrolled cohort.

In 2021, Merino Consolidated School played host to an inaugural 'Wellness and Connectedness Day'. Merino CS invited their 'like school' cluster school to a day to engage in a range of activities designed to foster a greater sense of wellness and mindfulness practices. The aim was to maintain awareness amongst the students and for the student to act in further spreading the message to the wider school community.

Merino Consolidated School has implemented a holistic approach to engage all students to achieve high standards in their overall behavior and thus their academic outcomes. The introduction of resilience and growth mindset skills and strategies was a major undertaking as was the continued implementation of School Wide Positive Behavior. The school was supported by the Department Social Worker who visited the school almost weekly to work with students and staff worked with schools showing best practice in the area of brain based and positive learning.

Our Attitudes to School data showed an improvement in the majority of areas from 2021. One consistent finding from the data was that students did overwhelmingly report that they felt 'challenged in their learning' and felt like they were 'expected to produce their best learning in class'.

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### Finance performance and position

In 2021 Merino Consolidate School ended the year with a healthy surplus. This was due to forward planning decisions made to establish a stronger fiscal management by the school principal, supported by the school council. Covid-19 impacted the final budget due in part to the reduced capacity for on-site resources due to Remote Learning being implemented for 3 out of the 4 school terms.

The surplus allows us to continue to ensure funding is allocated to programs in an ongoing capacity to meet the differentiated needs of the students in our school. Our surplus ensures students requiring additional assistance receive this support.

The current budget has been designed to continue to ensure that all areas of the school are appropriately funded each year. Throughout the year our financial status will be observed regularly to ensure that we remain within our financial limitations. The School Council continues to ensure that workforce planning is prudent and visionary to ensure programs are funded effectively.

**For more detailed information regarding our school please visit our website at**  
<http://merinocs.vic.edu.au/>

# Performance Summary

The Performance Summary for government schools provides an overview of how this school is contributing to the objectives of the Education State and how it compares to other Victorian government schools.

All schools work in partnership with their school community to improve outcomes for children and young people. Sharing this information with parents and the wider school community helps to support community engagement in student learning, a key priority of the Framework for Improving Student Outcomes.

Refer to the 'How to read the Annual Report' section for help on how to interpret this report.

## SCHOOL PROFILE

### Enrolment Profile

A total of 7 students were enrolled at this school in 2021, NDP female and NDP male.

0 percent of students had English as an additional language and NDP percent were Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

### Overall Socio-Economic Profile

The overall school's socio-economic profile is based on the school's Student Family Occupation and Education index (SFOE).

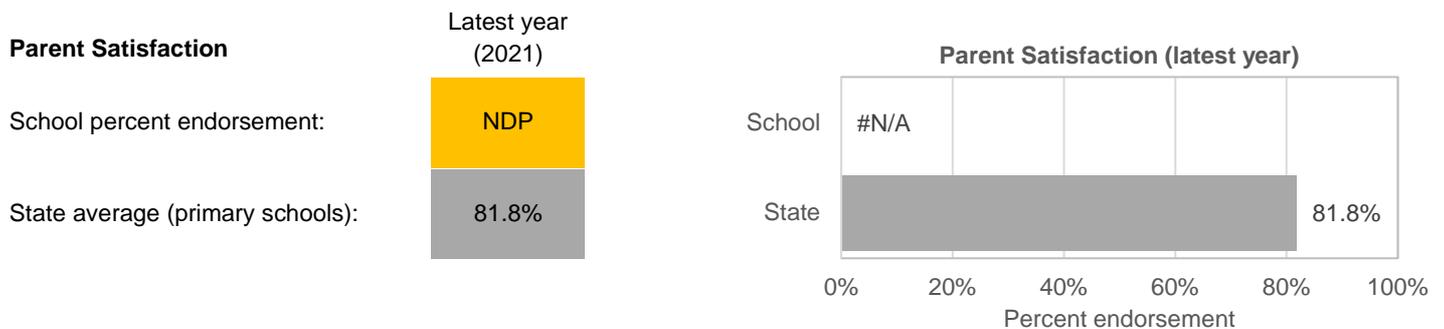
SFOE is a measure of socio-educational disadvantage of a school, based on educational and employment characteristics of the parents/carers of students enrolled at the school. Possible SFOE band values are: Low, Low-Medium, Medium and High. A 'Low' band represents a low level of socio-educational disadvantage, a 'High' band represents a high level of socio-educational disadvantage.

This school's SFOE band value is: High

### Parent Satisfaction Summary

The percent endorsement by parents on their school satisfaction level, as reported in the annual Parent Opinion Survey.

Percent endorsement indicates the percent of positive responses (agree or strongly agree) from parents who responded to the survey.

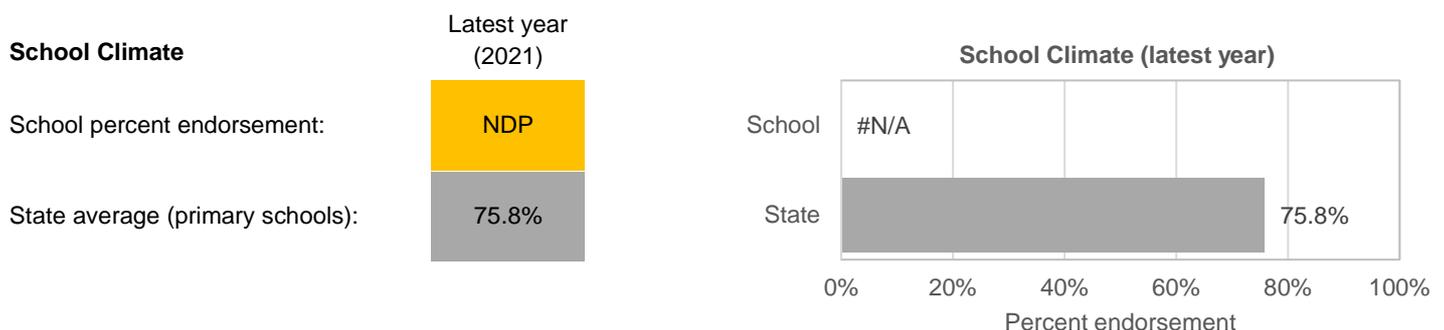


### School Staff Survey

The percent endorsement by staff on School Climate, as reported in the annual School Staff Survey.

Percent endorsement indicates the percent of positive responses (agree or strongly agree) from staff who responded to the survey.

Data is suppressed for schools with three or less respondents to the survey for confidentiality reasons.



## ACHIEVEMENT

**Key:** ‘Similar Schools’ are a group of Victorian government schools that are like this school, taking into account the school’s socioeconomic background of students, the number of non-English speaking students and the size and location of the school.

### Teacher Judgement of student achievement

Percentage of students working at or above age expected standards in English and Mathematics.

#### English Years Prep to 6

Latest year  
(2021)

School percent of students at or above age expected standards:

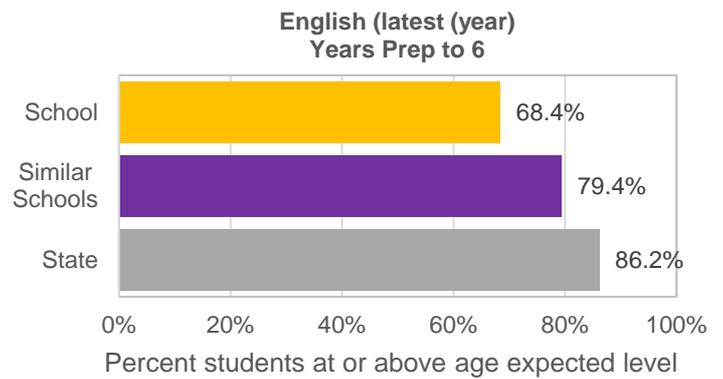
68.4%

Similar Schools average:

79.4%

State average:

86.2%



#### Mathematics Years Prep to 6

Latest year  
(2021)

School percent of students at or above age expected standards:

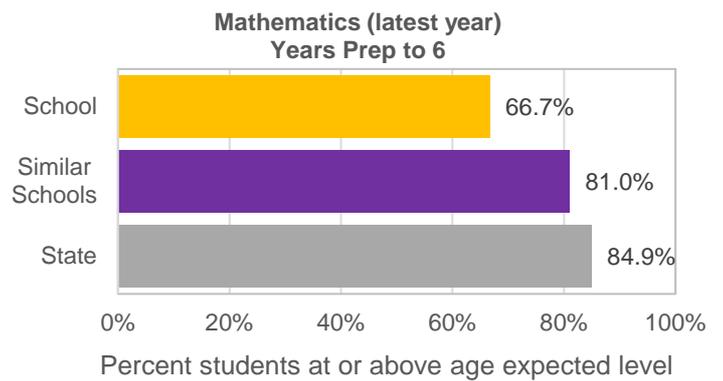
66.7%

Similar Schools average:

81.0%

State average:

84.9%



**ACHIEVEMENT (continued)**

**Key:** ‘Similar Schools’ are a group of Victorian government schools that are like this school, taking into account the school’s socioeconomic background of students, the number of non-English speaking students and the size and location of the school.

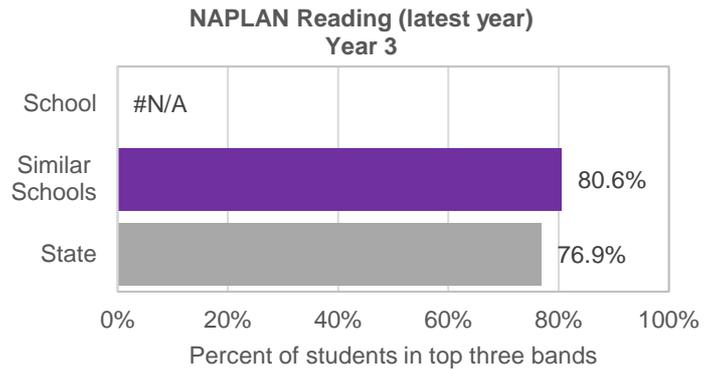
**NAPLAN**

Percentage of students in the top three bands of testing in NAPLAN.

Note: NAPLAN tests were not conducted in 2020, hence the 4-year average is the average of 2018, 2019 and 2021 data.

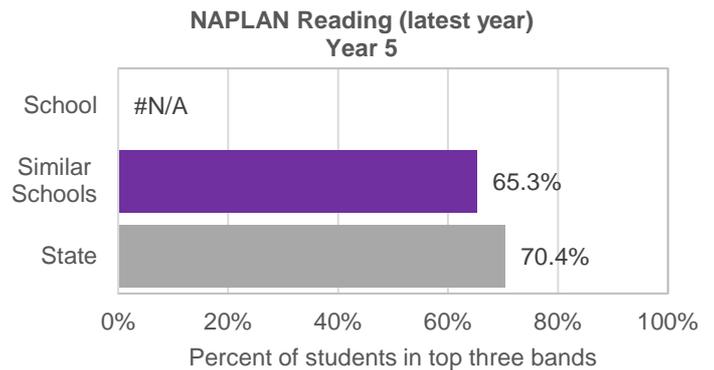
**Reading Year 3**

	Latest year (2021)	4-year average
School percent of students in top three bands:	NDP	NDP
Similar Schools average:	80.6%	69.5%
State average:	76.9%	76.5%



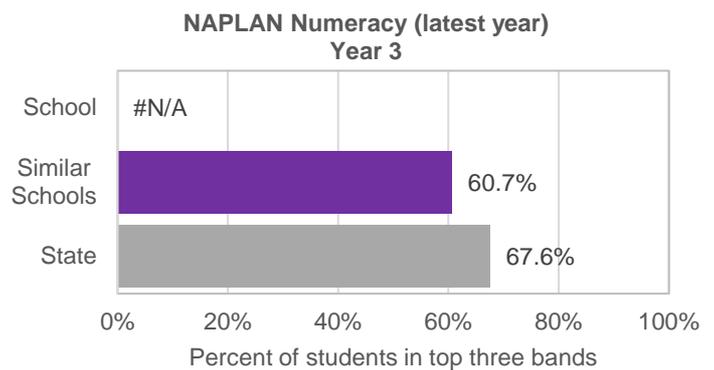
**Reading Year 5**

	Latest year (2021)	4-year average
School percent of students in top three bands:	NDA	22.2%
Similar Schools average:	65.3%	62.9%
State average:	70.4%	67.7%



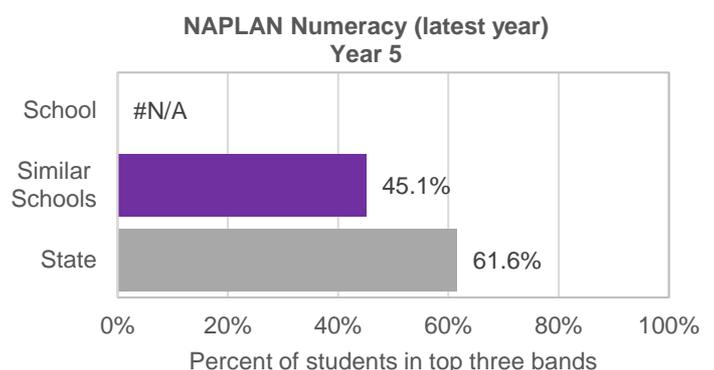
**Numeracy Year 3**

	Latest year (2021)	4-year average
School percent of students in top three bands:	NDP	NDP
Similar Schools average:	60.7%	66.3%
State average:	67.6%	69.1%



**Numeracy Year 5**

	Latest year (2021)	4-year average
School percent of students in top three bands:	NDA	66.7%
Similar Schools average:	45.1%	53.3%
State average:	61.6%	60.0%



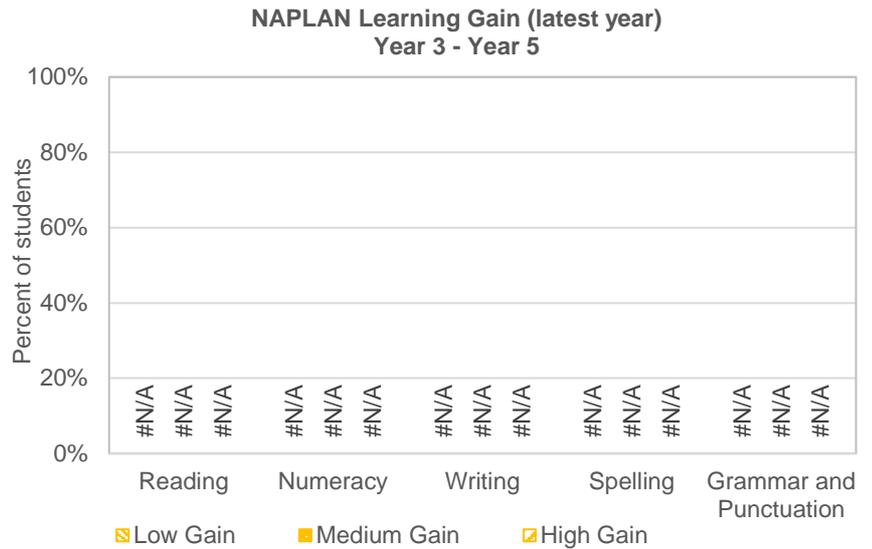
## ACHIEVEMENT (continued)

### NAPLAN Learning Gain

NAPLAN learning gain is determined by comparing a student's current year result relative to the results of all 'similar' Victorian students (i.e., students in all sectors in the same year level who had the same score two years prior). If the current year result is in the top 25 percent, their gain level is categorised as 'High'; middle 50 percent is 'Medium'; bottom 25 percent is 'Low'.

#### Learning Gain Year 3 (2019) to Year 5 (2021)

	Low Gain	Medium Gain	High Gain	High Gain (Similar Schools)
Reading:	NDA	NDA	NDA	29%
Numeracy:	NDA	NDA	NDA	18%
Writing:	NDA	NDA	NDA	16%
Spelling:	NDA	NDA	NDA	25%
Grammar and Punctuation:	NDA	NDA	NDA	12%



## ENGAGEMENT

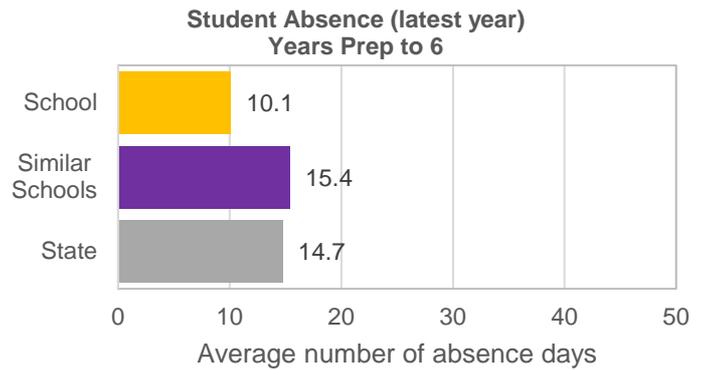
**Key:** ‘Similar Schools’ are a group of Victorian government schools that are like this school, taking into account the school’s socioeconomic background of students, the number of non-English speaking students and the size and location of the school.

### Average Number of Student Absence Days

Absence from school can impact on students’ learning. Common reasons for non-attendance include illness and extended family holidays. Absence and attendance data in 2020 and 2021 may have been influenced by COVID-19.

#### Student Absence Years Prep to 6

	Latest year (2021)	4-year average
School average number of absence days:	10.1	16.6
Similar Schools average:	15.4	15.1
State average:	14.7	15.0



#### Attendance Rate (latest year)

	Prep	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Attendance Rate by year level (2021):	NDA	NDP	NDP	NDP	NDP	NDA	NDP

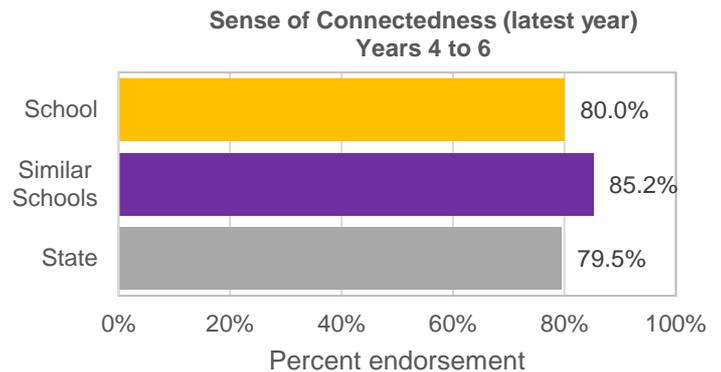
## WELLBEING

**Key:** ‘Similar Schools’ are a group of Victorian government schools that are like this school, taking into account the school’s socioeconomic background of students, the number of non-English speaking students and the size and location of the school.

### Student Attitudes to School – Sense of Connectedness

The percent endorsement on Sense of Connectedness factor, as reported in the Attitudes to School Survey completed annually by Victorian government school students, indicates the percent of positive responses (agree or strongly agree).

Sense of Connectedness Years 4 to 6	Latest year (2021)	4-year average
School percent endorsement:	80.0%	66.5%
Similar Schools average:	85.2%	86.5%
State average:	79.5%	80.4%

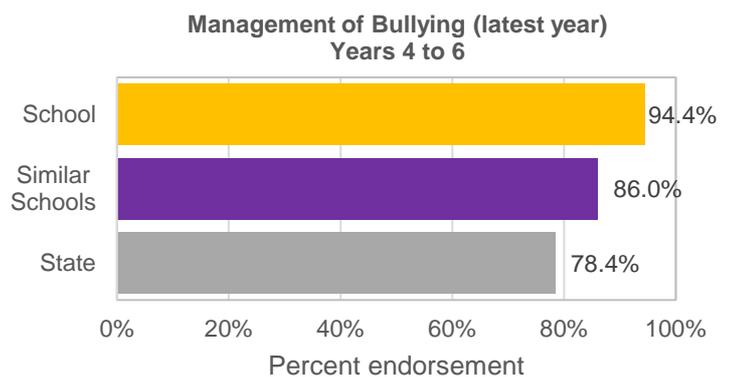


*Due to lower participation rates, differences in the timing of the survey/length of survey period and the general impact of Covid19 across 2020 and 2021, data are often not comparable with previous years or within similar school groups. Care should be taken when interpreting these results.*

### Student Attitudes to School – Management of Bullying

The percent endorsement on Management of Bullying factor, as reported in the Attitudes to School Survey completed annually by Victorian government school students, indicates the percent of positive responses (agree or strongly agree).

Management of Bullying Years 4 to 6	Latest year (2021)	4-year average
School percent endorsement:	94.4%	71.0%
Similar Schools average:	86.0%	87.7%
State average:	78.4%	79.7%



*Due to lower participation rates, differences in the timing of the survey/length of survey period and the general impact of Covid19 across 2020 and 2021, data are often not comparable with previous years or within similar school groups. Care should be taken when interpreting these results.*