2017 Annual Report to the School Community

School Name: Western Autistic School

School Number: 5290

Please note: Completed reports are to be uploaded to the [Strategic Planning Online Tool (SPOT)](#) for review and endorsement by the principal and school council president. Once the attestations are completed in SPOT, this page will be replaced and the report available for download.

VICTORIA State Government | Education and Training

About Our School

School Context

Western Autistic School is a multi-campus P-3 school for students with autism spectrum disorder with campuses in Laverton and Niddrie. In 2017 there was a total of 315 students enrolled at the school. The school has an autism specific, evidence based approach to teaching and learning that places the individual child at the centre. The school has developed this pedagogical model over nearly forty years. WAS' primary mission is effectively preparing its students to move to mainstream classroom settings or local special schools. Each year about 100 students enter the school and 100 transition to their next educational setting. In 2017, 99 students exited to new schools. School networks and outreach support is vital to the success of transitions. The WAS outreach program provided follow up support to all exiting students with a phone call to all schools in first term. Only six schools requested the Outreach Teacher visit their school to support the class teacher with understanding the learning needs of the child with autism and how to plan and design a differentiated individualised learning plan. The fact that most mainstream schools felt that they were meeting the needs of their student/s with autism is a testament to the preparation of the children for their transition by the WAS staff and individualised transition program devised in consultation with the mainstream school. *In 2018, a new Regional Autism Consultant will subsume part of the outreach function previously provided through WAS for students with ASD who have never attended WAS. The new Autism Consultant will take over the resourcing schools in the region providing expertise and coaching for teachers teaching students with ASD. This role will be auspiced by the ATI initially, and include participation in the development of the regional ASD professional learning program (see note below) and delivery of the professional learning program developed in consultation with ATI personnel. The WAS outreach program will continue to follow up our exit students who move on from WAS.*

The Autism Teaching Institute ATI is the school's training arm. WAS saw that it could only truly succeed in its mission to prepare its students to move to mainstream classroom settings if it could ensure the knowledge and teaching methodologies it had developed were also adopted by those mainstream schools. By 2017, the total number of graduates from the vocational diploma course reached about 430. *In 2018, DET has committed to offering 50 new scholarships to government teachers to undertake the trimester diploma course. Catholic Education Melbourne will also offer 10 scholarships for teachers in the catholic system. Further, the Autism Teaching Institute will develop and deliver a State Wide ASD Professional Learning Program (PLP) for DET Regional and School Leadership. As part of the government response the Inquiry into Services for People with Autism Spectrum Disorder, DET has committed $500,000 to develop and implement a coordinated Professional Development program for senior educational leaders throughout DET's support structures. The aim is to ensure all key personnel across the state have a sophisticated, evidence-based understanding of the best ways to teach students who have trouble accessing and engaging in the full suite of learning options, particularly students with an ASD diagnosis.*

The Wattle Education Intervention Program provides a short- term placement for adolescent students with ASD, Complex needs and Mental Health issues. The Program supports the educational needs of a group of adolescent students that despite all reasonable adjustments, are disengaging, or disengaged from their mainstream schooling (Home School). The Program implements research evidence based practices and intervention strategies designed to build the academic, personal development and wellbeing of students. These evidence-based practices and strategies are implemented in close collaboration with the Home School. The Program is designed to enable students to return to their Home School or another school or vocational pathway identified through the Student Support Group in consultation with the student and their parents/carers. *In 2018 the new revised enrolment policy for the Wattle EIP developed with and endorsed by the SWV Region, will be trialled for review at the end of the year.*

WAS Playgroup is a play-based autism specific early intervention program which follows a Social Developmental framework to social interaction. Most parents stay during the 2-hour session, with the exception of parents of the continuing enrolees who have been with Playgroup for 2 years or more. Implicit parent coaching is delivered through child-staff interaction, the structured routine as well as through information exchange and feedback. Siblings are also welcome to stay and participate. *In 2018 the Playgroup will reach out to collaborate with inclusive playgroups.*

Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO)

The Essential Elements for School Improvement form the foundation for building school improvement, underpin FISO and are present across all dimensions of the Continua of Practice for School Improvement (DET, 2017). Based on this construct, as an overall performance group our school is improving from a moderate base and could be high performing if we 'stretch' and continue to improve. In 2017 WAS undertook the Bastow Coaching for Leadership Program with the aim of improving student learning through a focus on improving school culture and climate. School Improvement Teams and the campus leadership teams received ongoing coaching to engage the whole staff and to facilitate processes that focus on Supportive Leadership, Staff Empowerment and Professional Learning.

Staff Opinion of School Climate in 2017 is just below the state median for special schools.

Achievement

The Curriculum Framework implemented in 2017 is based on a foundations curriculum and articulated in an ASD Individual Learning Plan. The core ASD learning goals address expressive communication, receptive communication, functional adaptive skills and social skills development. These align with the Victorian Curriculum content from the areas of English, Health and PE and Personal and Social Capabilities. The majority of the curriculum is taught through an embedded curriculum based on student's strengths interests and motivations and learning styles. Teachers incorporate student ILP goals and Victorian Curriculum content into a range of sessions

Student achievement for the purposes of this report is based on Teacher Judgement of Student Achievement. In 2017, in the area of English, a priority area for students with ASD, roughly 70% of students in Prep to Grade 3 were working at each of the Levels B, C and D of the Victorian Curriculum with just over 10% students operating at Foundation Level. The results for Mathematics are similar.

Parents' satisfaction with their child's schooling was high with 88% of parents reporting satisfaction with the school overall.

Engagement

WAS performance in the area of student attendance is high and has increased in 2017. The key impairments of ASD are substantial barriers to success within mainstream schooling. WAS provides a safe, supportive and child friendly learning environment where children are supported to learn to build positive relationships with other students and adults, and to gain the skills required for a successful transition into their next educational setting. Our pedagogical practice addresses the impairments in ASD to improve students positive experience of school.

Staff participation in the staff survey increased significantly this year, providing a more complete picture of staff attitudes.

Wellbeing

The school wide Professional Learning program in 2017 focused on embedding Functional Behaviour Assessment and Evidence Supported Interventions. New behavior support processes and planning documentation were embedded in team teaching programs across the school. A tiered process of responding to incidents of dangerous behavior was established in 2016 and in 2017 behavior teams worked to support staff to proactively develop and implement positive behavior plans. Data collection is consolidated across both campuses. Reported incidents of restraint have decreased further across the year, and incident reporting plateaued across the school. In 2018 a school goal is to further strengthen school- wide positive behaviour supports by aligning current school policies with the PBS Framework. An action is to conduct a GAP analysis with respect to the SW-PBS and to identify opportunities for improvement to policy and practice.

Successful integration is demonstrated to have positive effects on all members of the school community. Wellbeing across the school will be enhanced by membership of ATI training.

For more detailed information regarding our school please visit our website at [www.westernautisticschool.vic.edu.au. | www.autismteachinginstitute.org.au]

Performance Summary

The Government School Performance Summary 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.

Members of the community can contact the school for an accessible version of these data tables if required.

Key: Range of results for the middle 60% of Victorian Government Special Schools:
Results for this school: ● Median of all Victorian Government Special Schools: ◆

School Profile

Enrolment Profile

A total of 315 students were enrolled at this school in 2017, 53 females and 262 males.

22 percent were EAL (English as an Additional Language) students and 1 percent ATSI (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) students.

Overall Socio-Economic Profile

Based on the school's Student Family Occupation and Education index which takes into account parents' occupations and education.

low	low-mid	mid	high

Parent Satisfaction Summary

Measures the percent endorsement by parents on their school satisfaction level, as reported in the annual *Parent Opinion Survey*. The percent endorsement indicates the percent of positive responses (agree or strongly agree).

School Staff Survey

Measures the percent endorsement by staff on School Climate, as reported in the annual *School Staff Survey*. The percent endorsement indicates the percent of positive responses (agree or strongly agree).

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

Performance Summary

Achievement	Student Outcomes
Teacher Judgement of student achievement Percentage of students working at each Standard in: • English • Mathematics For further details refer to *How to read the Annual Report.*	**Results: English** **Results: Mathematics**

Performance Summary

Engagement	Student Outcomes

Average Number of Student Absence Days

Average days absent per full time equivalent (FTE) student per year. Common reasons for non-attendance include illness and extended family holidays.

Absence from school can impact on students' learning.

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Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	4-year average
Average absence days	23.8	24.8	22.6	24.9	24.0

Exit destinations

Percentage of students going on to further studies or full-time employment.

Note: This measure uses data from the previous year. Data excludes destinations recorded as 'Unknown'.

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	4-year average
% of students to further studies or employment	100.0	100.0	100.0	99.1	99.8

How to read the Annual Report

What does the *About Our School* section refer to?

The About Our School page provides a brief background on the school, an outline of the school's performance over the year and plans for the future.

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

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

The Performance Summary reports on data in key areas:

Achievement
Student achievements in:
- English and Mathematics

Engagement
- student attendance and engagement at school
- how many students leaving school go on to further studies or full-time work (secondary, P-12 and specialist schools)

What is the meaning of '*Data not available*'?

Some schools have too few students enrolled to provide data. There may be no students enrolled in some year levels, so school comparisons are not possible.

New schools have only the latest year of data and no comparative data from previous years.

The Department also recognises unique circumstances in Specialist, Select Entry, English Language and Community Schools where school-to-school comparisons are not appropriate.

Towards Foundation Level Victorian Curriculum

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 a disability or students who may have additional learning needs.

Financial Performance and Position

Financial performance and position commentary

Financial Performance - Operating Statement Summary for the year ending 31 December, 2017	
Revenue	**Actual**
Student Resource Package	$12,873,557
Government Provided DET Grants	$2,694,939
Revenue Other	$546,710
Locally Raised Funds	$49,307
Total Operating Revenue	**$16,164,513**

Equity[1]	
Equity (Social Disadvantage)	$41,920
Equity Total	**$41,920**

Expenditure	
Student Resource Package[2]	$12,790,458
Books & Publications	$2,601
Communication Costs	$29,955
Consumables	$106,127
Miscellaneous Expense[3]	$205,330
Professional Development	$22,795
Property and Equipment Services	$462,491
Salaries & Allowances[4]	$1,649,111
Trading & Fundraising	$16,872
Travel & Subsistence	$30,964
Utilities	$170,374
Total Operating Expenditure	**$15,487,079**
Net Operating Surplus/-Deficit	**$677,434**
Asset Acquisitions	**$14,840**

Financial Position as at 31 December, 2017	
Funds Available	**Actual**
High Yield Investment Account	$1,841,341
Official Account	$130,998
Other Accounts	$418,356
Total Funds Available	**$2,390,695**

Financial Commitments	
Operating Reserve	$431,675
Capital - Buildings/Grounds incl SMS<12 months	$1,750,000
School Based Programs	$86,478
Other recurrent expenditure	$122,542
Total Financial Commitments	**$2,390,695**

(1) The Equity funding reported above is a subset of overall revenue reported by the school
(2) Student Resource Package Expenditure figures are as of 05 March 2018 and are subject to change during the reconciliation process.
(3) Misc Expenses may include bank charges, health and personal development, administration charges, camp/excursion costs and taxation charges.
(4) Salaries and Allowances refers to school-level payroll.

All funds received from the Department, or raised by the school, have been expended, or committed to subsequent years, to support the achievement of educational outcomes and other operational needs of the school, consistent with Department policies, School Council approvals and the intent/purposes for which funding was provided or raised.