

WOORANNA PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL
No. 4989

**2008 Annual Report to the
School Community**



School Overview

If children are to maximize their learning, then their school must be a place of optimism, excitement and challenge, where students and teachers see each day as a journey, full of purpose, and where intellectual engagement and connectedness to the real world are priorities. Breaking out of the straight-jacket of conventional 'box-like' school planning is part of a continuum of radical change that has taken place at Wooranna Park over many years. Innovations in pedagogy and the physical environment have grown out of contemporary understandings about children and learning and from the school's strongly held belief that children have a right to the highest quality learning and social experiences.

Judging by the interest in our school from educators around Australia and overseas, our efforts have 'borne fruit'. The demand to visit our school is beyond the school's abilities to accommodate. Interest in the school is not confined to government schools, nor is it confined to primary schools. Requests to visit flow from secondary schools and the private and catholic school systems. Most of the State's regional directors for education have visited the school and several have entered into agreements with the principal for their teachers to visit or work alongside our staff. Some of the State's most prestigious private schools have also asked could their teachers "shadow" individual staff members. Facilities officers from both State and Catholic school systems are regular visitors and requests from overseas and interstate for parties of educators to visit the school are common.

Scholastically our children consistently perform above their like-school peers. Early in 2007, the Data and Evaluation Division of the State Education Department released Percentile / SFO Comparison Charts for Years 3 and 5, based on the State government's standardised testing program. The charts compare the school's expected achievement level, as determined by their Student Family Occupation, (SFO), and actual achievement levels in comparison to all other State primary schools, aggregated over the past 7 years. Based on SFO the school is expected to achieve at, or around, the 18th percentile – one being the lowest achievement level and 100 the highest – with schools above the 18th percentile expected to perform at a higher level than our school. Actual achievement levels in Year

5 show the school to be performing at the 73rd percentile for Spelling, the 60th percentile for Writing, 36th percentile for Reading and 59th percentile for Number. The percentile achievement levels in Number and Reading are considerably higher if only the last 4 years are aggregated, with students performing at the 61st percentile in Reading and 72nd percentile in Number. These results show the school to be achieving at well above its 18th percentile expected level, based on Student Family Occupation.

Despite the above results the school's Parent Opinion Survey was below the State Mean in a number of key indicators. The innovative nature of the school's teaching and learning program is not fully understood by some parents. Indeed, some parents are concerned that their children are missing out on some traditional teaching activities. Our after school Home Learning activities are more focused on the individual student and worksheets are not a common occurrence in the school. It is not always easy to "see" children's learning because of the school's focus on the development of thinking skills. Such skills are developed through collaborative research projects and verbal interactions which are not consistent with traditional repetitious written activities typical of schooling practices in the past.

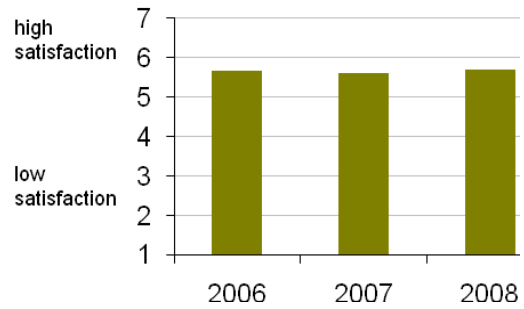
The gradual drop in enrolment numbers over the past few years is of concern as the school's global budget is determined, primarily, by school enrolment numbers. Less students, means a drop in our global budget, which lessens the school's ability to support the range of learning experiences presently provided. However, while our enrolment numbers have dropped slightly in recent years, student enrolment for the start of the 2008 and 2009 school years are up on the previous year. It is also pleasing to note that prep enrolment for 2009 continues to remain at a high level.

In order to ensure Victoria's compliance with the requirements of the Federal Government's 'Commonwealth School's Assistance Act' of 2004, Wooranna Park Primary School is required to include the following data in this report.

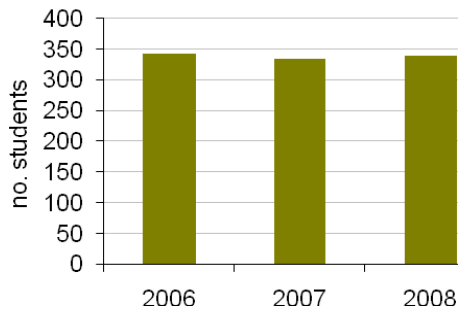
- The average score for teacher satisfaction (morale) at this school was 60.3 on a scale from 0 to 100 where 100 is the best possible score.

- Of the 25 teaching staff at Wooranna Park in June 2007, 23 or 92% were still at the school at June 2007. This figure across all Government schools was 87%.
- All teaching staff have participated in professional learning throughout the year, such as the Teacher Professional Quality Leave program, Australian Government Quality Teacher program and the Induction / Mentoring for Beginning program for teachers.
- The average number of days absent per teacher was 10.
- All teachers in Victorian schools are registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching. The Institute of Teaching website can be found at: <http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/content.asp?DocumentID=241>.

Parents' satisfaction with this school
(average score on scale of 1 to 7, where 7 is best possible score)



Total students enrolled in school



Principal's Report

Opened in 1971, Wooranna Park is a government primary school servicing the community of Dandenong North. The school has approximately 340 students from over 40 different ethnic backgrounds. The school is comprised of two buildings, typical of schools built last century, with rows of classrooms separated by a central corridor. Such schools are not noted for the creativeness of their design, or their attractive appearance.

The school is endeavouring to address the need for systemic change in education, with a focus on creating a learning environment consistent with contemporary understandings about learning. An emphasis is placed on students accepting responsibility for their learning, along with learning through collaboration with peers. Opportunities are also provided for students to pursue personal learning passions and negotiate their curriculum. There is a strong emphasis on media literacy and the use of computer software to create film, animation and music. Students are encouraged to co-create their learning where appropriate.

The school is strongly influenced by the philosophical thinking underpinning the Reggio Emilia Schools of Northern Italy and the work of Professor George Betts of North Colorado University, on autonomous learners. The school has adopted a cross-disciplinary, research based approach, to the development of curriculum, with an emphasis on deep and authentic learning experiences. All teachers work collaboratively in team teaching units, in order to model collaborative skills and to facilitate the provision of a differentiated curriculum.

Since 1997, the School Council has supported the introduction of sweeping changes to the school's teaching and learning programs and the school's physical environment. The school has developed its *raison d'être*, (reason for being), around the following focus areas:

Principles of learning	Organisational structures
Pedagogical practices	Physical environment
Assessment	Learning Theory

The inclusion of the school's physical environment as a component of our *Raison D'être* recognises the importance of the learning environment as a powerful "teacher" in itself, and its importance in facilitating learning. A copy of the school's *raison d'être* can be seen on the school's website: www.woorannaparkps.vic.edu.au.

Over the past three years, funding has been obtained to refurbish most of the school's learning areas and an interior architect has been commissioned to facilitate these projects. Internal walls have been selectively removed and new spatial divisions, furnishings and services added to create a rich variety of discrete and purposeful settings. A distinctive characteristic of the new multi-option environments is that all spaces/settings are interlinked and accessible, enabling people and ideas to flow easily. The refurbishment of the Year 5 & 6 Unit was judged best school refurbishment, under \$1 million, by the 'Council for Educational Planners International', and was shortlisted in the Victorian Premier's 2006 'Design Awards'. Refurbishment of the Year 2, Year 3 and Year 4 Units was commenced over the recent Christmas vacation, using funds obtained through the Federal Government's 'Investing in Schools Program'.

In 2008 the school received a state government grant of \$130,000 to undertake a refurbishment of the infant school toilets. A rationalisation of the infant toilet areas facilitated the creation of a music resource area, which in turn has supported the employment of a part time music teacher in 2009.

Other building works completed in 2008 involved extended and refurbishing the Year 2 Unit, in order to cater for the increased number of students in 2009.

Student Progress & Achievements

Student Learning

In 2008 student digital and hard copy portfolios were used to collect evidence of student understandings. Teacher moderation of Victoria Essential Learning Standards (VELS) data took place in June and December, with each child's results plotted on excel sheets for successful analysis of student progress and children at risk. Teacher knowledge of the VELS documents has continued to develop through their third year of use. In 2008 tracking systems, including a register for children at risk, continued to be updated each term. Detailed individual learning plans were constructed, making links to classroom programs. Support programs in ESL, speech pathology and English were extended upon, to address all needs. The use of SMART software continued to develop transference of information between teachers assisting planning, assessment and reporting.

In the Assessment of reading over 80% of children achieved the school's target of 90% or higher accuracy, at level one. In year one 99% of children achieved the school's target of 90% or higher accuracy at level five.

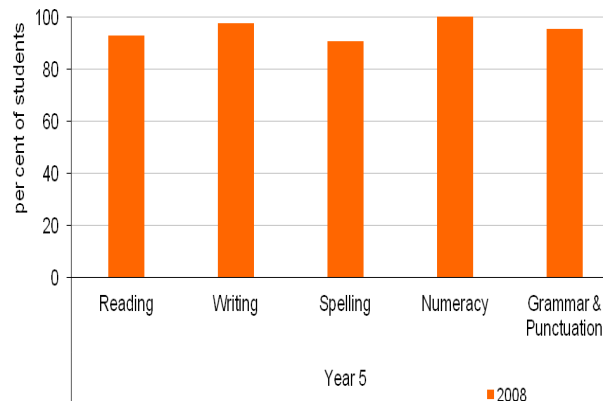
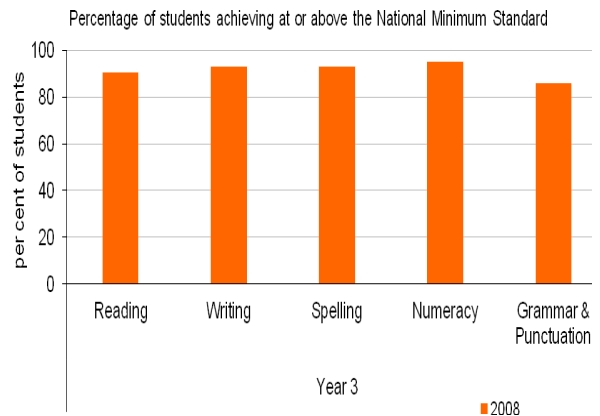
Teacher judgements against VELS English mean results were above expected standards in all data, except for a slight decline in Prep and Grade 4. The school mean has remained consistent in Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening for the last three years and compares well with the State mean.

Teacher judgements against VELS Number and Measurement remain consistent over the last three years. The school mean has been placed well above the SFO percentile range in Year Prep, One and Two. In Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 it has been above the SFO percentile range.

Naplan results in 2008 were above the SFO percentile range for Years 5 in Reading and Writing and compare well with the State mean. Year three results were slightly below the SFO percentile range and the State mean.

In Numeracy Years 3 and 5, we are well above the SFO percentile range and achieving at State mean. There is a correlation between teacher judgement of VELS data and the NAPLAN testing in Numeracy.

The school has considered the data we have received and it has developed new strategies to assist students with the NAPLAN testing, considering our school's philosophy and the formal nature of the NAPLAN testing which may disadvantage students. Ongoing teacher professional development will assist staff to make accurate assessment judgements of VELS data.



Student Engagement and Wellbeing

The school actively promotes student well-being and resilience, recognizing its underlying importance for student learning.

According to the Attitudes to School Survey for 2008, measures of Student Morale, Connectedness to Peers, School Connectedness and Learning Confidence are all in the second quartile of state results. Student motivation is almost in the fourth quartile, recognizing that the students' engagement levels in their curriculum are high. Teacher effectiveness and empathy were also rated in the second quartile, as was Stimulating Learning although these figures were lower than the previous year. There was a marked improvement in the areas of Classroom Behaviour and Student Safety .

Student absentee data for 2008 is slightly higher than 2007 across the school, rising by .3 to 17.1 days per year. However this is not a uniform increase as the percentage of absent students decreased in Prep, Year 2, Year 3 and 4. The prep 2007/Year 1 2008 cohort's absence rates remained high being 18.1days and 18.8 days respectively. The school will examine and address the reasons for this data.

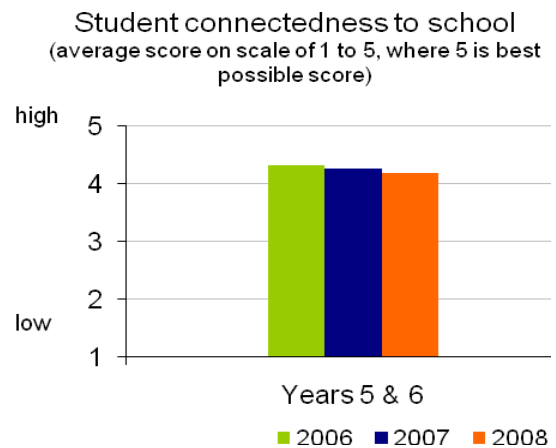
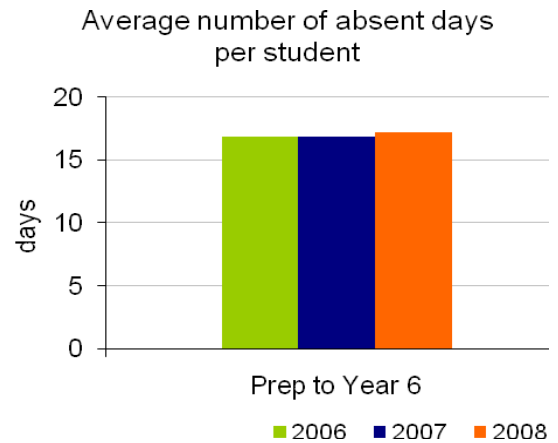
The number of absences increased in Year 5 and 6 as well, so the Transition program for Year 4 students was reviewed and updated at the end of 2008 in order to assist students to enjoy their experience in the Year 5/6 unit.

Some of the absences can be explained by the high numbers of students visiting friends and family overseas each year, however some parents continue to allow their children to stay at home for reasons other than illness. Students with irregular attendance often experience difficulty in their learning, so the school works with families with high absentee rates to support their child's regular attendance.

The Program for Students with a Disability currently caters for 12 students throughout the school, providing support and a modified program of learning in order to keep engagement and success levels high. Each student is provided with an Individual Learning Improvement Plan in consultation with parents at least once a term.

The school provides Literacy Support programs for individuals and students with the assistance of our Speech Pathologist, Guidance Officer and an

experienced Literacy support teacher. Speech Pathology Assistance programs supported 33 students individually or in small groups in 2008 while the highly successful Communication Laboratory program supported a further 35. This well regarded program developed to meet the needs of our students has been very successful in raising student levels of skill and understanding of verbal communication and the pragmatics of language.



Future Directions

Wooranna Park has an ambitious improvement program planned for the next few years. Central to this program is the continuation of the school's refurbishment program.

The school completed Phase 2 of the State Government's 'Building Futures Project' in 2008, and has been approved to begin the Master Planning Stage of said program. Wooranna Park can look forward to a substantial acceleration of the school's building and refurbishment program.

The school's current building program recognises a number of focus areas:

1. The creation of collaborative learning areas for all year levels. (While each of the learning areas are considered works in progress, six of the seven year levels have been established, with only the Year 1 Unit to be planned and refurbished in the future.)
2. The establishment of a welcoming communal area for the local community to interact with the life and daily happenings of the school is considered a school priority. Architectural Plans to create such an environment have already been prepared. These plans require extending the school entrance in order to relocate the school's administrative offices. A feature of the extension is the creation of a wheelchair ramp, projecting out from the present school buildings, encased by transparent, coloured glass, which doubles as a feature display area and incorporates a large rear projection video screen, allowing the school to publicise the life of the school to the outside community.
3. The development of the school's outdoor environment as an extension of indoor learning is considered a crucial component of future plans for the development of the school's learning facilities. Traditionally, State Government primary schools do not fully utilise their outdoor areas as "learning environments"
4. The establishment of a 'one stop venue' for early years services, including the establishment of a kindergarten on the school's grounds, is also considered a high priority. Many children attending Wooranna Park Primary School, do so without having first attended a pre-school.
5. Because of the age of the school, maintenance of the quality of the present school buildings would also need to be addressed in any future regeneration project.

In addition to the school's involvement in the Department's 'Building Futures Program', Wooranna Park anticipates significant benefits under the Federal Government's 'Economic Stimulus Program'. A refurbishment and rationalisation of the senior school toilets, along with the construction of a new multi-purpose learning area are two projects presently being planned for construction in 2009/10.

Equally important is the school's continuing focus on staff professional development programs in order to implement contemporary learning practices throughout the school. Updating the school's computer and associated ITC equipment is also considered a priority. To this end the school will continue to support teachers to travel interstate and overseas to further their professional development. Eight members of the teaching staff will be attending the Reggio Emilia Conference in Adelaide later this year and the School Council has already approved the leasing of an additional \$30,000's worth of computers and associated ICT equipment.

Financial Performance and Position

Wooranna Park Primary School operates effectively within the Student Resource Package (SRP) provided by DE&T. Student voluntary contributions / subject contributions – although small by comparison with other schools – are included in the curriculum resources budget and are incorporated in full into budget projections. Significant funding is received through Special Needs Funding based on student family occupations, English as a Second Language Funding and the 60+% of students in receipt of the Education Maintenance Allowance. The school is not able to rely on local fundraising to any significant degree, but actively pursues opportunities to obtain additional funds through private and government grants.

During 2008, Wooranna Park Primary School spent \$407,079 on Property Maintenance, \$43,989 on Consumables, \$17,552 on Communication Costs, \$44,448 on Furniture and Equipment, \$15,790 on Utilities, \$17,837 on Administration, \$41,587 on Professional Development and \$98,720 on Support/Service.

The 2008 School Accounts show, as of 31st December 2008, a Net Operating Deficit of \$170,380. This figure does not, however, include a further \$77,522 held by Department of Education in the school's name and \$30,000 borrowed from the Region to extend the Grade 2 Unit.

Internal controls and budget monitoring procedures operate in accordance with DE&T guidelines and audit requirements. Wherever practical, school accounts are paid by cheque, signed by the principal and countersigned by one of two School Council approved signatories. Bank reconciliation is undertaken by the bursar prior to presentation of the financial report to School Council by the Treasurer.

A comprehensive and effective accountability process for the utilisation of the school's resources has been established. The School Budget process ensures that all sectors of the school's operations receive a fair and appropriate allocation of resources in order to effectively undertake the efficient delivery of the school's objectives.



Wooranna Park Primary School acknowledges that within School Global Budget Procedures and

funding projections there exists a need to effectively administer resources in a manner which enables the prompt and efficient funding of school operations and commitments. At the same time there is a need to maximize potential returns on flexible assets. The School Council has approved and implemented an investment strategy that enables the investment of resources in accordance with state government guidelines.

Financial Performance – Operating Statement Summary for the year ending 31st December, 2008	
Revenue	2008 Actual
DE&T Grants	503,170
Commonwealth Government Grants	30,045
State Government Grants	
Other	27,553
Locally Raised Funds	68,942
Total Operating Revenue	629,710
Expenditure	
Salaries and Allowances	46,317
Bank Charges	235
Consumables	43,989
Books and Publications	211
Communication Costs	17,552
Furniture and Equipment	44,448
Utilities	15,790
Property Services	470,079
Travel and Subsistence	
Motor Vehicle Expenses	
Administration	17,837
Health and Personal Development	823
Professional Development	41,587
Trading and Fundraising	18,244
Support/Service	98,720
Miscellaneous	47,256
Total Operating Expenditure	800,089
Net Operating Surplus/- Deficit	-170,380
Capital Expenditure	35,538
Please note that the above amounts do not include any credit revenue or expenditure allocated or spent by the school through its Student Resource Package	

Financial Position as at 31st December, 2008	
Funds Available	2008 Actual
High Yield Investment Account	3,170
Official Account	2,641
Other Bank Accounts(listed individually)	
(insert)	587
(insert)	6,944
Total Funds Available	13,882
Financial Commitments	
2008 Actual	
School Operating Reserve	13,882
Co-operative Bank Account	;
Assets or Equipment Replacement < 12 months	-
Revenue Received in Advance	-
Building/Grounds including SMS < 12 months	-
Region /Clusters Funds/School Based Programs < 12 months	-
Provision Accounts < 12 months	-
Repayable to DEECD	-
Other Recurrent Expenditure (Accounts Payable)	-
Assets or Equipment Replacement > 12 months	-
Building/Grounds including SMS > 12 months	-
Region /Clusters Funds/School Based Programs > 12 months	-
Provision Accounts > 12 months	-
Co-operative loan >12 months	-
Beneficiary/Memorial Accounts	-
Total Financial Commitments	13,882

School Contact Information

Address:	95-105 Carlton Road, Dandenong North, 3175.
Principal:	Ray Trotter 
School Council President:	Dung Thai 
Telephone:	9795 2007
Email:	wooranna.park.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au
Web site:	www.woorannaparkps.vic.edu.au

This report contains summary data extracted from the School Level Report. If you would like to access the School Level Report, please contact (insert school contact details).