



Thrive, Achieve, Belong.

A large photograph occupies the right half of the page. It shows a person in silhouette climbing a bright yellow rope wall. The person is wearing a white shirt and a cap. The background is a solid, vibrant blue. The rope wall has several metal hooks and carabiners attached to it.

Berry Street School Annual Report 2017

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Overview

Berry Street believes all children should have a good childhood, growing up feeling safe, nurtured and with hope for the future. We believe all children have the right to a high quality education that helps them THRIVE, ACHIEVE, and BELONG.

The Berry Street School is a specialist independent school consisting of four campuses based in Noble Park, Morwell, Shepparton and Ballarat. The Berry Street School adheres to standards set by the Victorian and Federal Governments. We offer an adaptation of the National Curriculum for years 7–10 and the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL).

Many students referred to Berry Street Education Services have experienced trauma and disrupted attachment, social disadvantage and disengagement from school. Our students present with significant gaps in their academic learning and have found it difficult to learn in a group setting, presenting with behavioural and social problems in school.

The Berry Street Education Model encompasses a structured vision of wellbeing in the school community, including the support of education case-management for each of our students. Students flourish when the school community holds high expectations and students receive support that best meets their individual goals. Our relationship-based practice is grounded in unconditional positive regard for our students. The use of restorative practices assists students to build the capacity to self-regulate behaviour, feel nurtured in their relationships with the staff and ultimately to improve learning outcomes.

The Berry Street School provides students with an individual education plan encompassing holistic support offering intensive literacy, numeracy, and personal development programs. Programming includes counselling, advice, and post school pathways planning.

Characteristics of the Student Population

The young people enrolled at the Berry Street School are aged 12–18 years. Our students have previously struggled in mainstream education settings and have either stopped attending or have been excluded. Our program aims to engage our students in their own measurable, visible academic and personal growth, simultaneously teaching them strategies to become independent and autonomous learners in their schooling, pathway choices and adulthood.

In August of 2017, 138 students were enrolled across four campuses:

Noble Park: 32 students (15 girls and 17 boys, including 4 indigenous students)

Morwell: 55 students (18 girls and 37 boys, including 5 Indigenous students)

Shepparton: 32 students (13 girls and 19 boys, including 11 Indigenous students).

Ballarat: 20 students (11 girls and 8 boys, including 5 indigenous students).

All students were eligible for, but not all received, funding for students with disabilities.

The School Program

The curriculum at the Berry Street School is a specialised adaptation of the Victorian Curriculum for students enrolled in years 7 through 10. It is delivered through the Berry Street Education Model which is designed to facilitate the learning of young people who have experienced trauma.

Our curriculum is developed and delivered with high expectations for education attainment leading towards senior secondary certificates and further education and training. The curriculum program is based on five key learning areas – Literacy, Numeracy, Technology, the Arts and Health & Physical Education.

The Berry Street School also offers the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) to students who demonstrate readiness to undertake work at this level. We offer VCAL at Foundation level. The program is determined by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA). The qualification aims to provide the skills, knowledge and attributes to enable students to make informed choices about pathways to work and further education.

Individual Education Planning

The development of Individual Education and Learning Plans (IEP) is a key strategy in ensuring success for every student at the Berry Street School. Students are supported by their carers, parents or guardians and key school staff to develop a plan that identifies clear medium to long term learning goals as well as identifying broad life and behaviour goals.

The curriculum program for each student is then designed around this plan, based on a program that focuses both on setting short term goals for learning growth and allowing students to develop skills in an area of interest related to future employment.

Each student's IEP is reviewed and updated every term.

The Berry Street Education Model

The Berry Street Education Model (BSEM) is founded upon our model of Trauma-Informed Positive Education, which encompasses a structured vision of wellbeing and therapeutic principles of teaching and learning. Anchored strongly in the four campuses of the Berry Street School, the BSEM focuses on five domains:

- **BODY:** Building school-wide rhythms and body-regulation through a focus on physical and emotional regulation of the stress response, de-escalation in school and classroom contexts, and mindfulness opportunities throughout the school day.
- **RELATIONSHIP:** Increasing relational capacities in staff and students through attachment and attunement principles with specific relationship strategies with difficult to engage young people.
- **STAMINA:** Creating a strong culture of independence for academic tasks by nurturing resilience, emotional intelligence and a growth mindset.
- **ENGAGEMENT:** Employing engagement strategies that build willingness in struggling students.
- **CHARACTER:** Harnessing a values and character strengths approach to enable successful student self-knowledge which leads to empowered future pathways.

Through these healing and growth lenses, our school staff have developed personal strategies, pedagogical connections to the Victorian Curriculum, and whole-school practices for healing and growth for our students.

Staff at the Berry Street School

In 2017, a total of 40.8 x EFT staff were employed at the Berry Street School.

	Whole School Role	Noble Park Campus	Morwell Campus	Shepparton Campus	Ballarat
Principal	1.0				
Deputy Principal	1.0				
Campus Head		1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Lead Teacher		1	2	1	1
Teachers		4.0	7.8	4.0	2
Student Wellbeing Coordinator		1.6	3.5	1	1
Education Support		1.0	3.4	0.6	0.7
Admin support	0.0	0.2	0.4	0.4	0.8
Total:	2.0	7.8	16.5	8.0	6.5

All teachers are fully qualified, with VIT registration. The high ratio of staff for the number of students is a reflection of Berry Street's belief that our students require specialist, individual support in order to support their educational progress.

Evaluation 2017

Student Attendance

Student attendance remains a continuing challenge for the school, and after making major improvements in the last four years in this area, we are experiencing smaller improvements than in the past. In 2017 overall results are better than the previous year, with a school-wide attendance rate of 61% up from the 56.33% achievement of 2016. However, we still have some distance to go to catch our 2015 result of 76.8%. It will again need to be a focus of our work for 2018.

Average attendance for students in Years 7 to 10 at the Noble Park campus as measured across the school year was 40% which is a very slight decrease on the previous year (41.7%). Attendance across all year levels was 44%, which is a small improvement (42.25%). This low attendance reflects this being a particularly difficult group of students. However, there is a clear aim to improve attendance levels in Noble Park.

The Morwell campus is continuing to experience difficulties with student attendance, with the data sitting at 52% for 2017. This is a drop from 58% in 2016. Morwell is a very distressed area and these figures are symptomatic of the broad range of difficulties the region experiences. We have had considerable success with many of the students to date, and expect that attendances will improve.

The Shepparton campus has shown a very pleasing result with an overall improvement for Year 7 to 10 average attendance at 76.5% compared to 57% in 2016. Attendance across all year levels was 77% compared to the 2016 result of 66.85%. This is an excellent result, and the more so because these are students who were significantly disengaged from schools. The Shepparton campus has a dedicated bus that picks students up and delivers them home each day. This “assertive outreach” approach is a key factor in the higher attendance levels at this campus.

Ballarat, like Shepparton is in the happy position of being able to collect students from home. Their average attendance was 62.5% and attendance across all year levels was 71%. This is a very pleasing result for this new campus.

Academic growth

Since early in 2014, the systematic collection of student outcome data across the campuses has improved and triangulation of the data is better ensuring consistency. As of mid- 2014, all students complete On Demand tests, in line with students across the state system. A few students from each campus complete the NAPLAN tests. These, together with a range of other testing measures, have enabled us to more accurately measure student growth against national standards. Academic reports now indicate growth in both Literacy and Numeracy, ensuring that growth in each of these areas can be measured separately over time.

In 2017, to further refine the quality of our measurement, we introduced measuring the individual strands for both literacy and numeracy.

Literacy Growth

All campuses	Reading & Viewing	Writing	Speaking & Listening
Total Growth	1.06	0.9	0.96

Numeracy Growth

Campus	NNA	MNG	SNP
Total Growth	.85	.95	.93

Students across all campuses have demonstrated an average growth of 1.15 years in Literacy and .91 years in Numeracy for those who have remained at the school for the entire year.

For the first time in 2017, we looked closely at the link between student attendance and improvements in literacy and numeracy. Our results showed that students with attendance rates of 70% or over showed the most growth- 1.3 years in Literacy and 1.7 years in Numeracy. This is an especially pleasing outcome for numeracy achievement as our students report a significant lack of confidence in their maths skills.

Literacy Growth with over 70% attendance

All Campuses	Reading & Viewing	Writing	Speaking & Listening
Total Growth	1.1	1.3	1.1

Numeracy Growth

All Campuses	NNA	MNG	SNP
Total Growth	2.1	2.1	1

Student testing indicates a broad range of Literacy and Numeracy levels exist across the school with some students testing at grade 1 level, and other showing at or above their age appropriate level. Emphasis is therefore placed on individual improvement over time.

We are proud of our work in supporting students to grow academically, particularly for those students who show above expected growth. Our emphasis now needs to be on improving literacy and numeracy growth for those students who currently are showing smaller growth than desired. This will be a major focus in our new Strategic Plan, and we will be working at improvements in student attendance as a clear strategy to lift outcomes for our students.

VCAL and VET Achievements

The VCAL program is a 'hands on' Senior Secondary school certificate. 45 Berry Street School students were enrolled in our Foundation VCAL program in 2017. Seven students were successful in gaining their Foundation VCAL certificate. Our first two Noble Park students graduated, four from Morwell and one from Shepparton which was an outstanding success for those students. Others successfully completed units of work toward the Certificate.

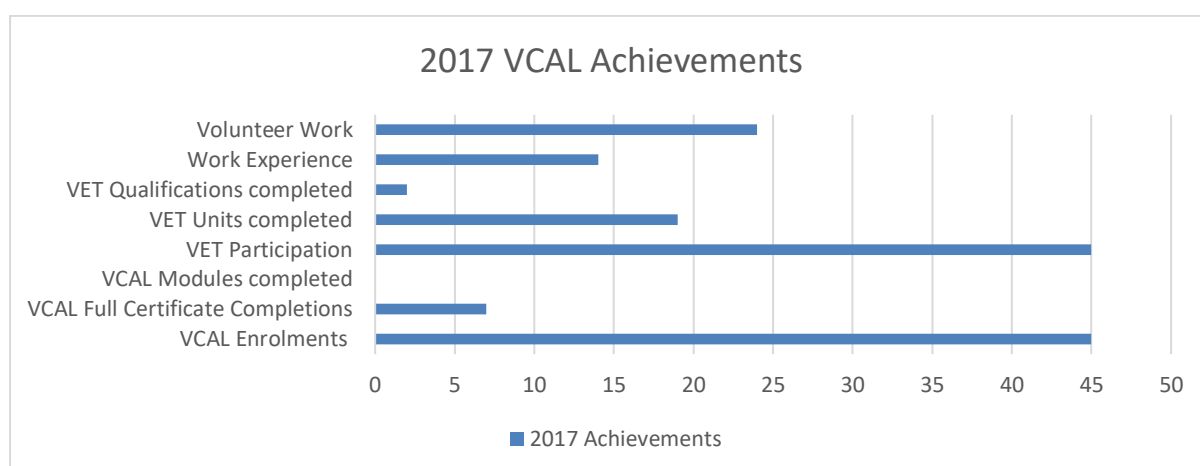
As part of our VCAL program, students also gain access to nationally recognised Vocational Education and Training (VET) and work experience. These opportunities are significant because they help our students to prepare for further education and work when they finish school in addition to contributing valuable credit towards the completion of a VCAL certificate. In 2017 highlights included:

- 45 students participated in nationally recognised VET programs

- 2 students gained full Certificate II Qualifications in Sports and Recreation and Hospitality
- 19 students successfully completed one or more short course to support them in preparing for casual work in the hospitality, retail and construction sectors
- 14 students undertook work experience placements
- 24 students undertook volunteer work

Throughout the year, Berry Street School was also fortunate to work closely with the Foundation for Young Australians (FYA) to trial two of their innovative career and enterprise education programs: 'Worlds of Work' and '\$20BOSS'. With a training program and \$20 start-up capital loaned from FYA, 16 students from Morwell developed and launched their own small business. Not only did our students gain valuable enterprise skills including project management, product development, marketing and sales, they succeeded in paying back their loan and making a small profit that was donated to another local charity. A fantastic result that was commended by FYA staff. Due to the success of this trial, FYA programs are being extended to other campuses in 2018 and 2019.

Overall, since the commencement of our VCAL program in 2013, 26 students have completed their full Foundation VCAL Certificate. These students stand with the thousands of other students across Victoria who have completed their secondary education and can move more securely on to further study or employment. Our VCAL program is proving to be successful and the continued development of the program will ensure that many more students graduate from our school with a Senior Secondary Certificate in coming years.



Student Destinations

In 2017, the Berry Street School provided a program to a total of 148 students.

Overall, 85% of our 2017 students have remained either in education, are employed or are receiving ongoing support in determining their future pathway. 80 students continued their education at Berry Street School in 2018 and 68 students exited the school.

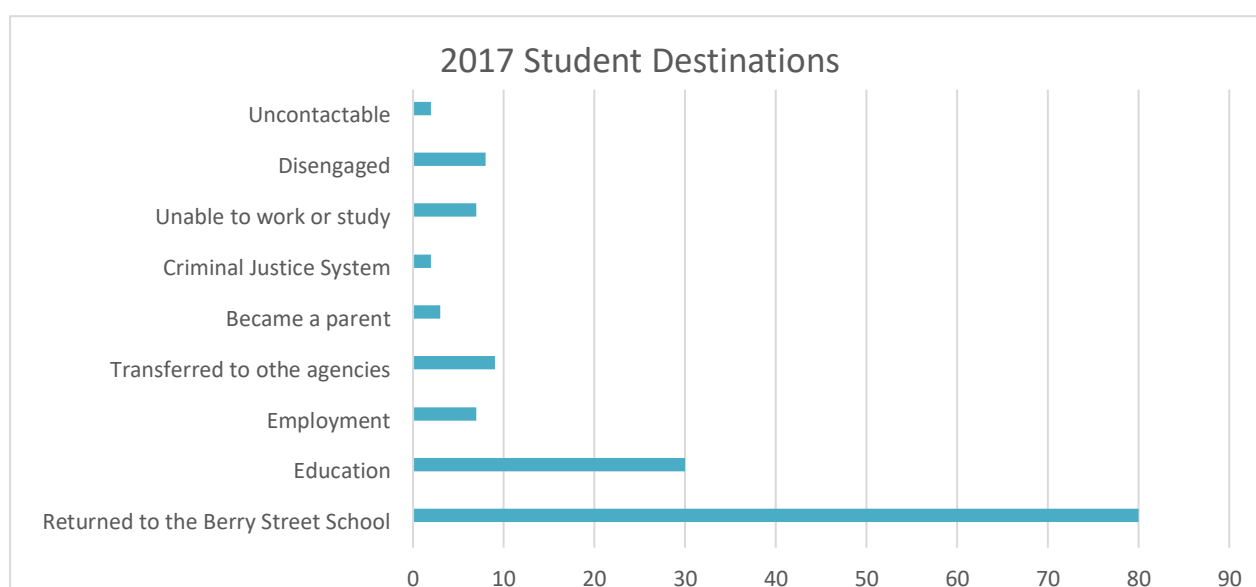
Of the students who exited, 68% transitioned into a meaningful pathway that included:

- 44% of students continuing in education (another school, TAFE or further education provider)
- 10% of students gaining employment
- 13% of students being supported by other agencies to find suitable education or work pathways.

Of the remaining 32% students who exited:

- 3% of students were uncontactable
- 4% of students became parents
- 3% of students entered the criminal justice system
- 12% of students were completely disengaged from education or employment and;
- 10% of students were unable to engage in work or study because of disability, medical conditions, mental health issues and/or addiction.

Without exception, the students that remain disengaged or unable to work or study, have experienced, and are continuing to face, very challenging personal circumstances. The school recognises the need for long-term follow up and support for these young people. In 2018 we will continue to strengthen our programs and seek additional funding to provide more intensive support to our students in developing sustainable future pathways.



School Satisfaction Surveys

In 2017, the Berry Street School took part for the eighth time in the LEAD survey, a suite of stakeholder surveys offered by Independent Schools Victoria. In 2017, we surveyed staff, parents and students.

The eight years of data gathered clearly demonstrates the growth and development of the school over this time. The overall satisfaction of students, teachers and school leaders has improved steadily over these years. In 2010, overall satisfaction was well below the mean for all Independent Schools. We have now had three continuous years of high levels of satisfaction from all stakeholders, at or above the ISV and similar schools means in all of these areas, with student and parent satisfaction significantly higher than the state mean.

The 2017 LEAD reports summarise our overall performance against other schools. Once again, our overall performance and stakeholder perceptions showed well above both the ISV mean and against similar schools in six of the nine areas measured, the exceptions being learning outcomes, peer relationships and transitions. Our financial wellbeing was rated highly, with spending per student

being almost double the ISV mean in the School Effectiveness measures; all Stakeholder Perceptions rated highly, as did Morale and Staff Perception of the workplace. In 2016 we began work at all campuses to improve our parent and community involvement and community service. Against the ISV benchmark parent perceptions of the school in all domains is in the highest quartile. Further, they are overwhelmingly positive about the schools' academic program, quality of teaching, learning outcomes, pastoral care, discipline and safety and parental involvement with all of these domains being above the ISV mean and above the 'similar schools' mean.

Student responses to the general student satisfaction questions of the survey rated the Berry Street School highly, above the ISV and like school mean. Student perceptions of our learning outcomes, peer relationships and transitions were below. However, pastoral care, personal development, discipline and safety and school ethos were all high, registering comfortably above both means.

Overall, the survey results indicate that our challenges are in the areas of student transition (how well the school prepares students for the next stage of their education) and retention (though this showed improvement from 2015), facilities and resources, student attendance and learning outcomes.

Teacher Professional Learning

Staff professional development sessions continued to be provided regularly at individual campuses, as well as bringing all staff together once each term. Key activities were coordinated via a professional development calendar maintained in iWise. Further, forty-five staff participated in professional development relating to the future of work and contemporary career education. To consolidate our Pathways work, one staff member has commenced Certificate IV in Career Development to become a qualified career practitioner with a second commencing in early 2018.

Resources and Facilities

Funding was sought to develop a master plan for the buildings and facilities of the school. The masterplan detailed the status of each campus and clarified the structural and facility requirements to ensure safe and effective facilities were in place to support delivery of an effective school program. It was determined that the facilities of Morwell and Noble Park were not adequate and that new facilities were needed. Potential improvements to the Shepparton and Ballarat campuses were detailed. The desirable spaces and facilities for a model school were determined to assist in the future acquisition of appropriate school campus sites.

Activity was undertaken to work towards the stated urgent priorities for the school.

1. **Morwell:** relocation of campus.

A number of buildings and sites for the location of a new campus were investigated but found to be unsuitable. With the development a new Central primary school in Morwell, two school sites to be vacated by the Department of Education and Training (DE&T) were considered to be a suitable for the Berry Street campus and negotiations were conducted with DE&T, the La Trobe Valley Shire Council, and the La Trobe Valley authority. One site was acquired by the Department of Health and Human Services and we were hoping the other may be a viable option as it was to be sold publicly. However, this option proved to be a dead end. We will continue in our search for an appropriate site.

2. **Noble Park:** We continue to maintain this facility and believe relocation is the only option. At this stage, processes to explore relocation are not planned until after the Morwell site has been sorted.

3. **Shepparton:** It is essential to achieve security of tenure before we undertake any further development works. However, we are doing smaller upgrades as needed. Negotiations with

TAFE to secure the land of the current leased school site have been suspended due to TAFE placing a hold on any acquisition or sale of property. Negotiations will continue if the option to acquire becomes acceptable to TAFE. 2017 has seen no movement on this issue.

- 4. Ballarat:** The school site purchased in Sebastopol has proved to be very successful. Staff have developed a kitchen garden and have established a chook yard. We were successful in gaining a grant to develop a library and this has been started.

The Berry Street School
Year Ended 31 December 2017

Revenue from operating activities	
Private Income	7,726
State Government Recurrent Grants	1,868,910
Commonwealth Government General Recurrent Grants Program	3,053,712
All other Commonwealth Government Recurrent Grants	29,624
ABSTUDY Allowances Paid Direct to School	156
Donations	333,956
Total revenue	5,294,084
Expenses from operating activities	
General Teaching Staff	2,958,930
Non Teaching Staff	193,544
Workcover	118,640
Superannuation	284,584
LSL	68,039
Total salaries	3,623,737
Teaching, Admin & Clerical expenses	1,305,740
Building & Grounds Operations	186,893
Rent & Operating Lease expenses	506,768
Depreciation	15,950
Total non-salaries	2,015,351
Total expenses	5,639,088
Operating deficit	(\$345,004)
Revenue from non operating activities	0
Expenses from non operating activities	0
Non operating profit	0
Deficit for year	(\$345,004)



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