



Thrive, Achieve, Belong.

Berry Street School Annual Report 2015



Overview

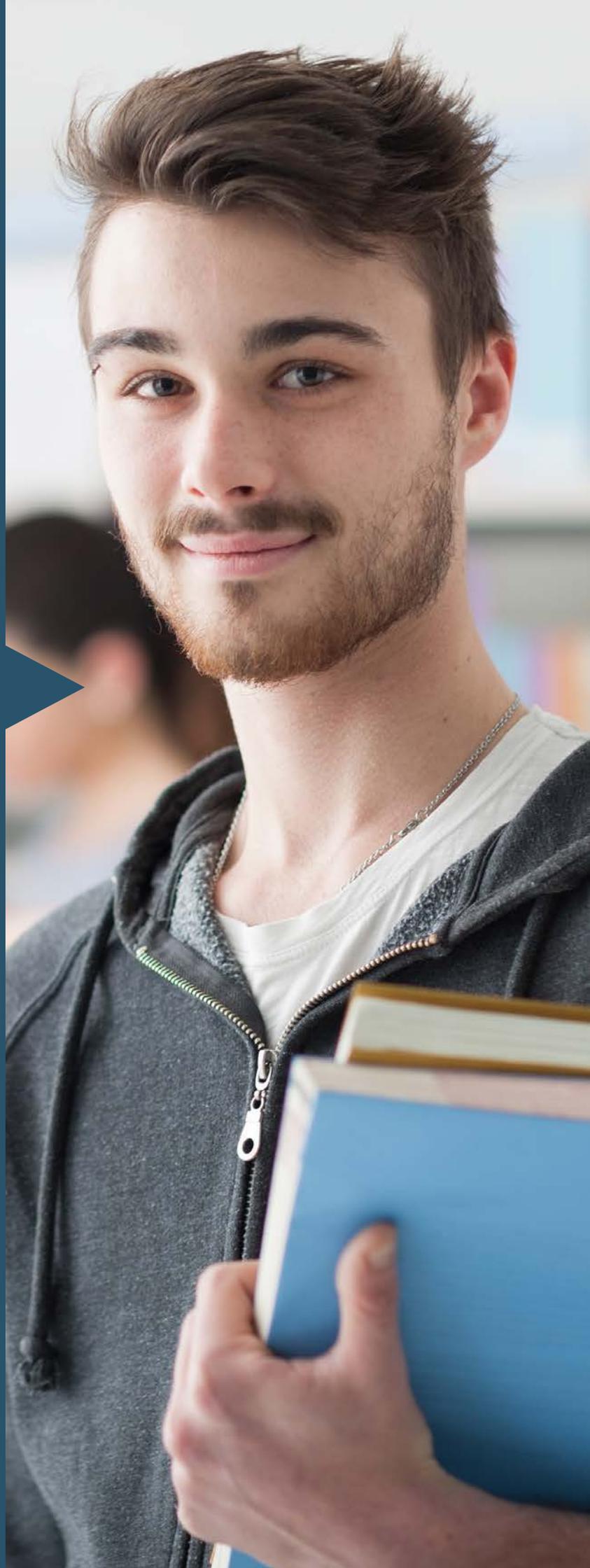
Berry Street believes all children should have a good childhood, growing up feeling safe, nurtured and with hope for the future. We believe all children have the right to a high quality education that helps them THRIVE, ACHIEVE, and BELONG.

The Berry Street School is a specialist independent school consisting of three campuses based in Morwell, Noble Park, and Shepparton. 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 as a result of neglect, abuse, violence, or being witness to family violence. Our students may have significant gaps in academic achievement 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 is held to 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 and staff to build the capacity to self-regulate behaviour, nurture relationships 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 growth, simultaneously teaching them strategies to become independent and autonomous learners in their schooling, pathway choices and adulthood.

In August of 2015, 138 students were enrolled across three campuses:

Noble Park: 37 students (8 girls and 29 boys, including 4 indigenous students)

Morwell: 63 students (24 girls and 39 boys, including 11 Indigenous students)

Shepparton: 38 students (18 girls and 20 boys, including 8 Indigenous students).

All students were eligible for and received funding for students with disabilities.

The School Program

The curriculum at the Berry Street School is a specialised adaptation of the Australian Curriculum for students enrolled in years 7 through 10.

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.



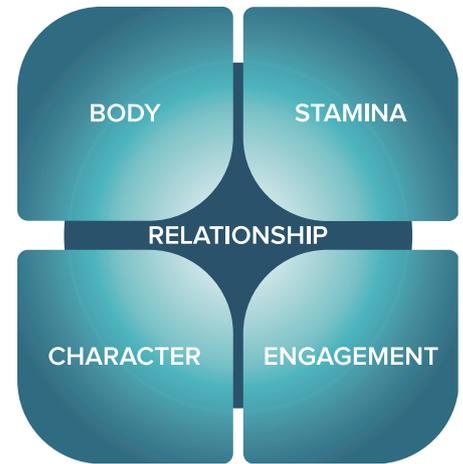
The Berry Street School also offers the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) to students who demonstrate readiness to undertake work at this level. We offer VCAL at both Foundation and Intermediate level. The program is determined by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA). 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 broad life and behaviour goals, as well as identifying clear medium to long term learning 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 improvement and allowing students to develop skills in their area of interest.

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



The Berry Street Education Model

In 2014, we renamed our therapeutic approach, formerly known as trauma-informed positive education as the Berry Street Education Model (BSEM). BSEM is implemented at the three campuses of the Berry Street School. Anchored strongly in the three 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 National Curriculum, and whole-school practices for healing and growth for our students.



Staff at the Berry Street School

In 2015, a total of 37.2 x EFT staff were employed at the Berry Street School.

The Noble Park Campus: 8.9 EFT - 1.0 Senior Education Manager, 6.2 x EFT teaching staff (including a Lead Teacher) and 1.7 x EFT education support staff.

The Morwell Campus: 18 EFT - 1.0 Senior Education Manager, 10.4 x EFT teaching staff (including 2 Lead Teachers) and 6.6 x education support staff, including a Student Well Being Lead Teacher.

The Shepparton Campus: 8.5 EFT - 1.0 Senior Education Manager, 6.1 x EFT teaching staff (including a Lead Teacher) and 1.4 x EFT education support staff.

The Principal of the Berry Street School (EFT 1.0) and the Statewide Senior Education manager (EFT 0.8) were also included in the staff count for the first time. These positions were both based at the Berry Street central offices in Richmond.

Education support staff include Student Well Being Coordinators, Youth Workers and Integration Aides.

All teachers are fully qualified, with VIT registration. One staff member has Special Education qualifications.

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.

Major Achievements 2015

Student Outcomes and post-school destinations

In 2015, the Berry Street School provided a school program to a total of 167 students.

Overall, 82% of our 2015 students have remained either in education, are employed or receiving direct support in determining their future pathway.

- 90 students have remained at the school for 2016 (54% retention rate.)

77 students exited the school in 2015.

47 of the exited students were provided with the support they needed to move into a meaningful education or career pathway (28% of our 2015 population):

- 12 students transferred to TAFE or other vocational training programs
- 5 students moved into employment
- 15 students transferred to another school
- 15 students are being supported by other agencies to find suitable education or work pathways.

Of the other 30 students who exited:

- 13 students relocated to other areas
- 17 students remain, at the time of writing, disengaged from employment and further education. Without exception these students 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, and, in 2016, will be putting in place a major project focussed on better meeting the educational, social and emotional needs of our students post leaving the school.



VCAL and VET achievements

In 2014, five students were successful in gaining their Foundation VCAL certificates. In 2015, seven students of the 56 enrolled, completed their Foundation VCAL certificate. Six of these students were from the Morwell campus, and one from the Shepparton campus.

These 12 students now stand with the thousands of other students across Victoria who have completed their secondary education and can move on to further study or employment.

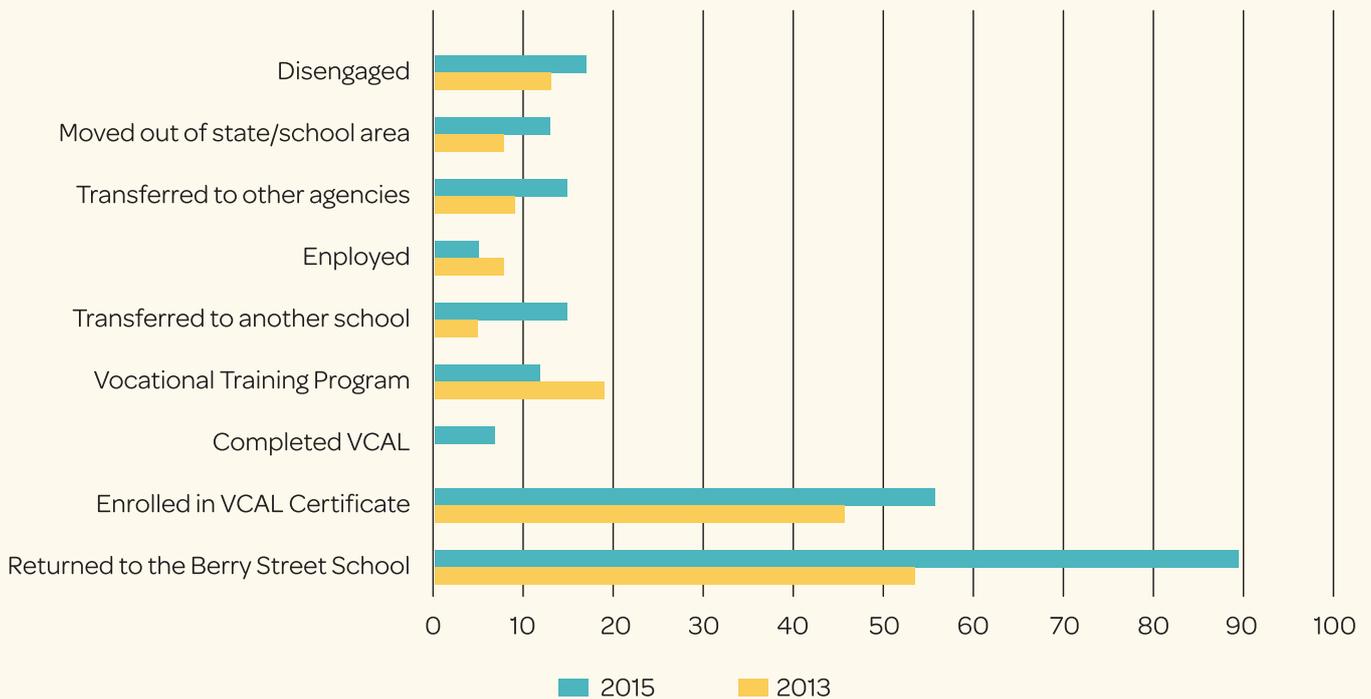
Students in our senior program also have access to Vocational Education programs. These are undertaken as part of students' VCAL course, or by students transitioning into VCAL. In 2015, 35 students enrolled and completed units in Certificate II in Work and Vocational Pathways (using Berry Streets own RTO status). Sixteen were enrolled and completed units in Certificate II in Public Safety, a certificate provided by an external RTO. Both

certificates are delivered at the Noble Park and Morwell campuses, allowing students who struggle in TAFE environments to undertake accredited training in a more contained environment.

In addition, students completed individual accredited units in First Aid, White Card and Catering.

This VCAL program is proving to be highly successful and the continuing expansion in the delivery of units will ensure that many more students graduate from our school with a Senior Secondary certificate in coming years.

Student Outcomes



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.

A number of our students complete the NAPLAN tests, and, as of mid-2014, all students complete On Demand tests, as do students across the state system. 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.

For the second half of 2014, our students demonstrated an average of 0.71 years of growth in their AUSVELS Literacy levels, and 0.69 years in their AUSVELS Numeracy levels.

In 2015, students across all campuses have demonstrated an average growth of 0.6 years in Literacy and 0.7 years in Numeracy, for those who have remained at the school for the entire year. Of these students, 41% showed growth of more than one year in their Literacy levels (with the highest growth being 2.6 years), and 32% showed growth of more than one year in their Numeracy levels (with the highest growth being 2.9 years).

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.

New enrolments at the school demonstrate high levels of growth in their first year at Berry Street as a direct result of high levels of intervention and support. This rate of growth then tapers off to a more predictable, steady growth.

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 next Strategic Plan.

Student Attendance

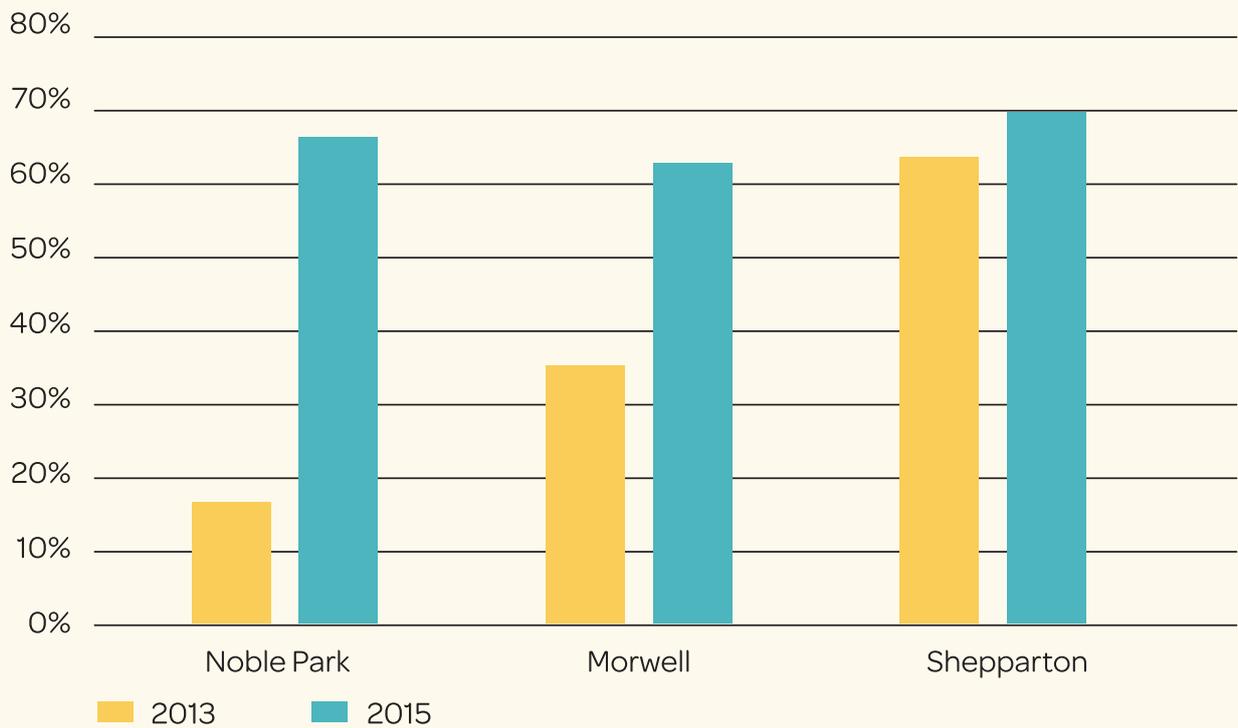
Our attendance data has continued to show huge improvement over the past three years.

Average attendance for students in Years 7 to 10 at the Noble Park campus as measured from February until the end of June, from 2013 until 2015, increased dramatically from 17% to 68.4%.

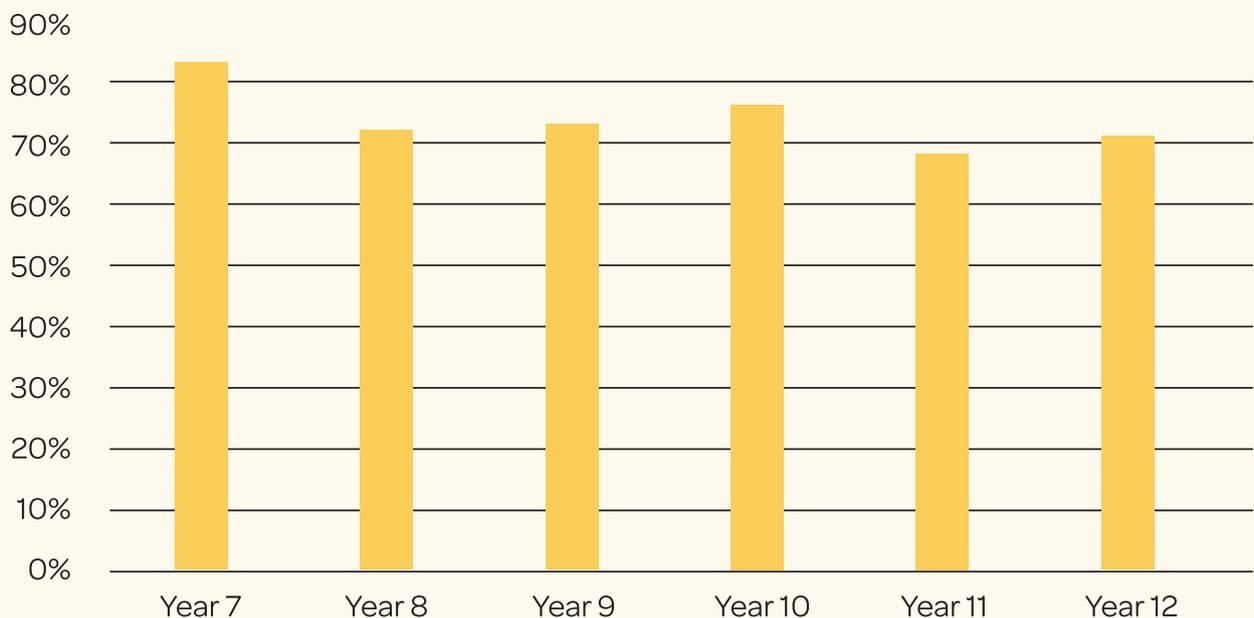
Student attendance at the Morwell campus nearly doubled in 3 years from 2013 until 2015, with average attendance improving from 36.1% to 64%.

Positive rates of student attendance at the Shepparton campus also showed an improvement increasing from 65% in 2013 to 71% in 2015.

Student Attendance Growth per Campus



Student Attendance at the Berry Street School 2015



School Satisfaction Surveys

In 2015, the Berry Street School took part for the sixth time in the LEAD survey, a suite of stakeholder surveys offered by Independent Schools Victoria. In 2015, we surveyed staff, parents and students.

The six 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, whereas in 2015 we were above the mean in all of these areas, with student satisfaction significantly higher than the state mean.

Student responses to the general student satisfaction questions of the survey rated the Berry Street School highly, and well above the ISV mean in all areas. Of note is the steady increase in the rating of students indicating the school being a safe place to learn. A small drop in students' confidence in basic skills may indicate a need to concentrate some staff professional development in this area. Students also rated the quality of teachers at the school very highly, and well above the ISV mean.



Our teacher survey results have shown significant growth in all areas over time. We are at or above the state ISV mean in School Ethos and Values, Discipline, learning Support, Pastoral care and Quality of Teaching and Learning. Areas of continuing challenge for us are Facilities and Resources, Technology and Parent and Community involvement, with results in these areas still below the Independent Schools mean. Though these areas were rated much more highly than in previous years, they remain areas where growth and development is needed, and will become a focus in our next strategic plan.

Parent Satisfaction with the school has remained well above the state mean for all domains. Results for 2015 are again above those of 2014, showing very high levels of parent satisfaction with the work of the school.



In 2015, the school again took up the opportunity to compare our results against other independent special and specialist schools. Once again the perceptions of staff, parents and students were overall very high and above the Special School ISV mean. Stakeholder overall satisfaction was very high, in all cases at or above the state mean. Academic achievement ratings were slightly lower than those of 2014, and perceptions of our management of student transitions was lower than in the past. Parent and Community Involvement remain an area of great challenge for us and will need sustained work over the next strategic planning period.

Teacher Professional Learning

Our priorities for professional development in 2015 were aligned with our strategic goals and focused on:

- Supporting the improved implementation of the Berry Street Education Model.
- Improving teaching practice and consistency.
- Improving learning outcomes in Literacy and Numeracy programs.
- Consistent implementation of Restorative Practices across the school.

There was a focus on developing greater interaction of staff across campuses, sharing of classroom practice, and improved curriculum planning documentation. Key processes were implemented that supported the focuses to better ensure success in achievement of the priorities. These processes and practices included:

- Regular cross campus Lead Teacher meetings focusing on curriculum
- The formation of Professional Learning Teams with cross campus membership meeting termly and focussing on improved teaching and learning.
- The introduction of a formalised process for peer observation of classroom teacher practice.
- Support for staff to give and receive feedback relating to classroom practice.

A commitment was made to have whole school Professional Learning Days once per term. Support was provided by Independent Schools Victoria (ISV) in planning and presenting professional learning on these days. Other staff professional development sessions were run regularly at individual campuses. Key activities were coordinated via a professional development calendar maintained in iWise.

New Directions

Following the recommendations of the 2014 Strategic Review of the Berry Street School, a principal was appointed in 2015 with responsibility for the development of curriculum, oversight of teaching and learning, staff supervision and professional development.

The Senior Leadership Team for the school was established to include the Senior Managers of each campus, the Statewide Senior Manager of Education and the principal. The Senior Leadership Team met regularly twice per term with clear focuses on strategic planning and operational issues. A review of Position Descriptions was initiated to ensure clarity of roles and alignment of roles across campuses. A broader based Leadership team including Senior Leaders and Lead Teachers met termly to develop strategic directions and to review progress towards targets in the Annual Improvement Plan.

Resources and Facilities

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

1. Morwell: relocation of campus. A number of buildings were examined in the Morwell region but none were deemed suitable for the purpose of the school. Local real estate agents have been given the criteria for a desirable school building and we will continue to seek suitable alternative accommodation.
2. Noble Park: improve facilities and relocate in the short term future. A makeover of the campus was conducted by a number of business supporters of Berry Street. Painting and decorating of all teaching areas and the indoor recreation area, and provision of improved furniture have resulted in a positive improvement to the cosmetics of the campus. Processes to explore relocation have not been initiated.
3. Shepparton: achieve security of tenure before any further development works. The campus was painted internally. Works were begun to rectify some structural termite damage. The leasing arrangement with Go TAFE was extended for another two years.

Improvements were made to the information technology infrastructure including wireless networking and access to the Broadband Network.

The Berry Street School

Year ended 31 December 2015

Revenue from operating activities	
Private Income	161,796
State Government Recurrent Grants	1,412,240
Commonwealth Government General Recurrent Grants Program	2,525,802
All other Commonwealth Government Recurrent Grants	39,416
ABSTUDY Allowances Paid Direct to School	546
Total Revenue	\$4,139,801
Expenses from operating activities	
General Teaching Staff	1,989,944
Non Teaching Staff	351,712
Workcover	65,779
Superannuation	210,833
LSL	47,031
Total Salaries	\$2,665,299
Teaching, Admin & Clerical expenses	834,552
Building & Grounds Operations	156,980
Rent & Operating Lease expenses	189,966
Depreciation	38,675
Total non-salaries	\$1,220,173
Total expenses	\$3,885,472
Operating surplus	\$254,329
Revenue from non-operating activities	0
Expenses from non-operating activities	0
Non operating profit	0
Surplus for year	\$254,329



BERRY STREET SCHOOL

Thrive, Achieve, Belong.

Central Office

A 1 Salisbury St Richmond VIC 3121

T (03) 9429 9266

F (03) 9429 5160

E info@berrystreet.org.au

www.berrystreet.org.au

Morwell Campus

T (03) 5135 6680

Noble Park Campus

T (03) 9239 1400

Shepparton Campus

T (03) 5820 3900

ABN 24 719 196 762

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