

ANNUAL
REPORT
2020



thrive
achieve
belong

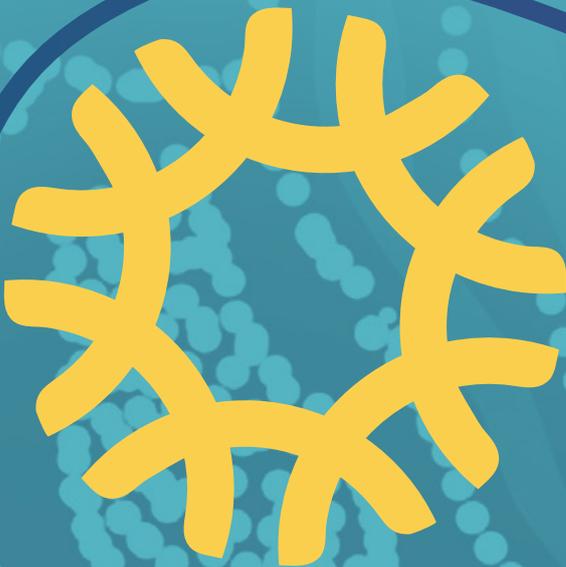
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The Berry Street School acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the lands, skies, and waterways across Australia. We acknowledge that sovereignty was never ceded, and we recognise the impact colonisation has had and continues to have. We appreciate the knowledge, wisdom and learnings of the longest living cultures and we are guided by their strength and resilience. The Berry Street School pays our respect and we acknowledge Elders as holders, protectors and educators of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.



We believe that children, young people and families should be safe, thriving and hopeful. As one of Australia's largest independent family service organisations, this belief is the heartbeat of our organisation.



Our vision is that children who have experienced trauma or have not experienced success in mainstream schools are supported to not simply survive secondary education but to Thrive, Achieve and Belong. Many students referred to the Berry Street School have experienced trauma and disrupted attachment, social disadvantage and disengagement from school. Our students have often had significant gaps in their education leading to challenges in adjusting to learning in a group setting.

We believe all young people have the right to a high-quality education that prepares them to achieve their full potential and transition to a pathway that contributes to society with confidence and hope.

We do this through positive relationships within a safe environment where students feel valued. Students flourish when the school community holds high expectations and students receive support that best meets their individual goals. Our school community celebrates diversity underpinned by unconditional positive regard for all. The Berry Street School is committed to contributing to the nurturing and strong sense of connection to country and cultures for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people together with the support of their families and communities.

The Berry Street School provides students with an Individual Education Plan encompassing holistic support offering intensive literacy, numeracy, and personal development programs. Programs include counselling, advice, and post school pathways planning.

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 Victorian Curriculum for years 7-10 and the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) for Senior Secondary.

We believe vulnerable students need the best teachers and staff to support their growth and academic success. We employ staff who believe in young people's ability to succeed no matter the challenges. To support staff to be their best, we have a rigorous and intense professional learning program focused on literacy, numeracy, the Berry Street Education Model (BSEM) and staff wellbeing. The school is committed to continual improvement and supports teachers with instructional coaching to ensure teachers are making positive impact on the academic growth of our students. Multiple data collection domains and points in time inform our distribution of resources together with developing a pedagogy that responds to students' needs within a cultural context.

Our aim is to make a courageous social impact by providing a high quality education for vulnerable secondary aged students who are able to Thrive, Achieve and Belong and make a positive contribution to their community.

The school is part of their storyline to their future.

CONTACT DETAILS

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Governing Authority

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AgeID Number

80042

MINIMUM STANDARDS ATTESTATION

We, Joanne Alford and Michael Perusco, attest that the Berry Street School is compliant with:

- All of the requirements for the minimum standards and other requirements for the registration of schools as specified in the Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic), except where the school has been granted an exemption from any of these requirements by the VRQA
- Australian Government accountability requirements related to the 2020 school year under the Australian Education Act 2013 (Cth) and the Australian Education Regulations 2013 (Cth)
- The Child Safe Standards prescribed in Ministerial Order No.870 – Child Safe Standards, Managing Risk of Child Abuse School.



Joanne Alford
Principal
Date: 07.08.2020



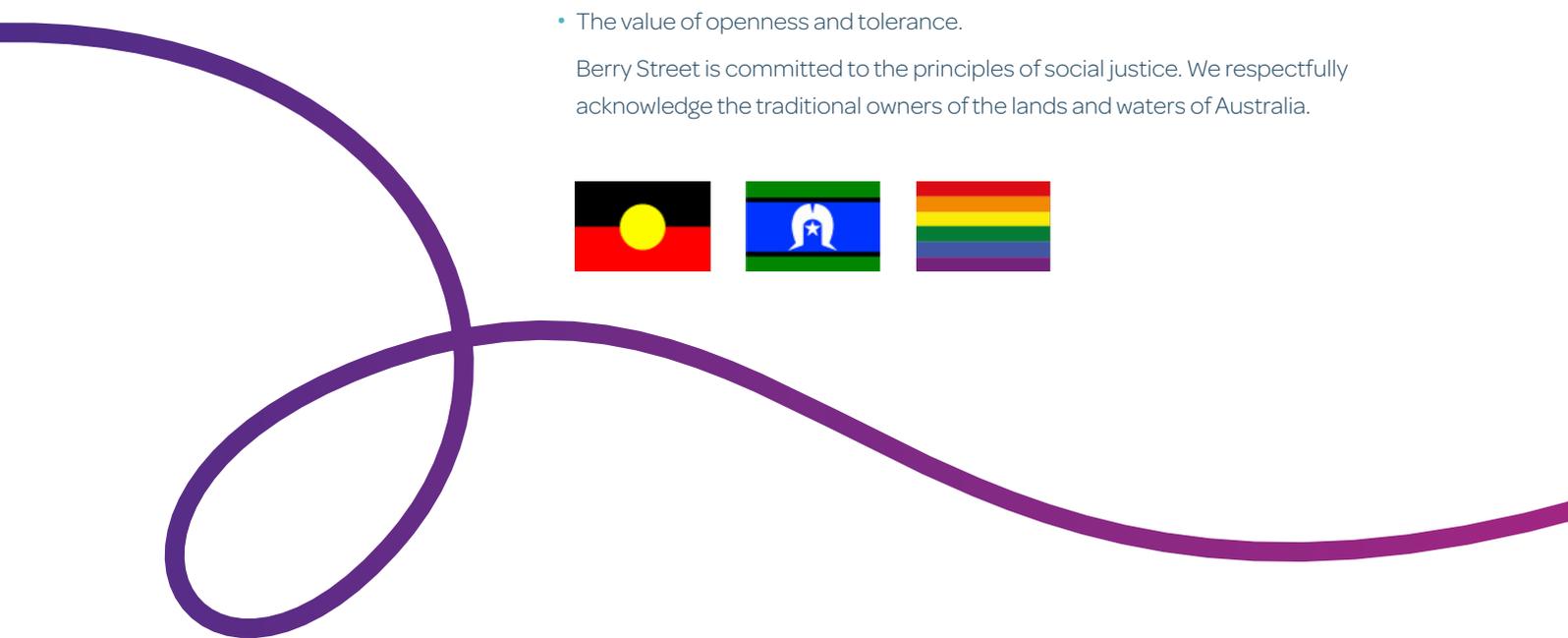
Michael Perusco
Chief Executive Officer
Date: 07.08.2020

STATEMENT OF DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES

The Berry Street School is committed to Australian Democratic Principles including:

- Elected Government;
- The rule of law;
- Equal rights for all before the law;
- Freedom of religion;
- Freedom of speech and association; and
- The value of openness and tolerance.

Berry Street is committed to the principles of social justice. We respectfully acknowledge the traditional owners of the lands and waters of Australia.



OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Our Board of Directors consists of people committed to our vision who voluntarily give their time, energy, knowledge and skills to steer Berry Street through our challenges and successes.



Dr Joanna Flynn AM,
President

Board Director at Ambulance Victoria and Forensicare Victoria. Former Chair of Eastern Health and Medical Board of Australia. MBBS, MPH, HonDMedSc, FRACGP, FAICD



Tim Cartwright,
Vice President

Former Acting Chief Commissioner of Victoria Police. Family Violence Reform Implementation Monitor. BA, Grad Dip.



Michaela Healey,
Vice President

Director & Advisor
LLB, MAICD



Joshua Grace-Ware

Executive Manager, HR Operations,
REA Group
BA & MA of Management (ER/IR), GAICD



Steve Gross

Senior Managing Director,
Macquarie Infrastructure & Real Assets
MBA, BCom



Paul Mann

CFO, Future Fund
B.Comm, CA, CFAC



Megan Mitchell

National Children's Commissioner
BA (Hons English), MA (Psych),
Dip Ed, MA (Social Policy)



Eric Passaris

Partner, Audit and Assurance,
Grant Thornton Australia
B.Ec, CA, CPA, RCA



Karen McLean

Paediatrician
MBBS, M Epid, FRACP

OUR PATRONS

Patron-in-Chief: The Honourable **Linda Dessau AC**, Governor of Victoria
Patron: Professor Emeritus **Sir Gustav Nossal, AC, CBE, FAA, FRS.**

CHANGES TO THE BOARD

Karen McLean
joined the Board in March 2020




Michael Perusco
Chief Executive Officer

CEO REPORT

The 2020 year was one that tested us all in so many different and varied ways. In particular, schooling was significantly disrupted across Victoria for most of the year and we were very conscious of our responsibility to do all we could to support our students.

As an Independent specialist school, the Berry Street School remained open for face to face teaching and learning during each lock down as did many of Berry Street's services. Our staff team worked tirelessly to deliver education packs to students who could not attend classes and these packs became a life line of connection to school. Throughout each lockdown, staff remained committed to helping students continue to grow in their academic outcomes, wellbeing and personal development. At the end of each lockdown, staff found creative and innovative ways to reconnect students with the School.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to our teachers and all staff across our multi campus school for all that they have done to help our students Thrive, Achieve and Belong.

Despite the pandemic, I am pleased that we were able to launch Berry Street's Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) in November 2020. Closely aligned to the Berry Street RAP is the School's own formal commitment to reconciliation with the support of Narrangunnawali, an organisation supporting schools across Australia to develop an action plan that grows the work of reconciliation.

Finally and most importantly, I would like to acknowledge our student group. Your resilience and determination is an inspiration.

ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF STATEWIDE SERVICES REPORT

Since 2020, as the new Acting Executive Director Statewide Services, my role includes overseeing the Berry Street School. Amongst other responsibilities, this involves reporting to Michael Perusco (CEO) and the Berry Street Board about issues relating to quality, risks and growth opportunities for the School. Working with Joanne Alford (Principal) and her team, I have thoroughly enjoyed learning about the school's governance and operation and what is needed to help achieve its goals. I have visited each campus and met with staff and students and look forward to doing more of this in the future. Getting the vibe of each campus and the overall approach to learning and wellbeing has reminded me of what is important about our work.

In this annual report you will see many accounts of the Berry Street School's and students' achievements over 2020 especially in light of the challenges of Covid-19. You will read of our advances in technology and digital capacity, our continued operation throughout lockdowns and other restrictions; as well as the exciting data that demonstrates the growth of our students' capacity in literacy and numeracy. You will hear about our ongoing application of the Berry Street Education Model showcasing this leading model of trauma informed positive education. You will see the themes of 'thrive, achieve and belong' as our mantra and as our aims for each of our students and school community. This also describes the Berry Street School itself as we aim to **achieve** more for our students; as we **belong** as a member of the Victorian education system and as a core service within Berry Street; and as we **thrive** as we expand and grow in our reach and capability as a school.

Our Berry Street School not only opens doors for our students but gives them the time, space and support to walk through those doors head held high. In partnership with our students, families and carers, the Berry Street School across our four campuses enables genuine opportunities for students to **belong** – through friendships, at home, in School, as part of community and beyond. When our students discover what they can **achieve** – such as developing new skills, building knowledge about themselves, each other and the world and being creative and experimenting with change - they can celebrate progress and success. With these experiences, comes the chance to **thrive** – to stretch and reach out for new opportunities to grow, try new things, be brave, and find their wings.

There has never been a more important time to support our students to thrive, achieve and belong than during a worldwide pandemic. Seeing what we've individually and collectively achieved in 2020 shows us what we need to do in the future to thrive. In particular, this year has been striking in reminding us of the importance of belonging, of connection, of relationships, and of companionship. At the Berry Street School we are proud and determined to support young people in their journey to show themselves and the world what is possible.

It has been an honour to support the students, teachers, staff and leadership team this year to thrive, achieve and belong.



Annette Jackson

Annette Jackson

Acting Executive Director
Statewide Services



A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Joanne Alford'. The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned below the portrait.

Joanne Alford
Principal

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

One of my favourite things about being Principal of the Berry Street School is visiting the campuses and being a part of and observing the great work of students and staff. Being on a campus gives my work purpose and meaning as well as informing the strategic work the school leadership team needs to do to ensure our students are receiving the best possible resources and teaching that we can provide.

Due to the global pandemic, this year has at times challenged that aspect of my work and made me realise how much I missed being connected to the dynamic day to day life of our school community. As an Independent specialist school, we remained open during each lockdown and were able to respond to our community of families, carers, students, staff and school leaders with compassion, perseverance, prudence and of course humour (to help us all through the tough times).

I am especially proud of the way staff responded to the challenges of the pandemic working so creatively to keep our students connected to their learning. Our teaching and wellbeing teams delivered education packs to students who could not attend on site learning due to health concerns. Teachers designed fun engaging lessons on our remote learning platform as well as all staff checked in with students daily.

My pride also extends to our students who face many challenges in their learning journey without the heavy blanket of Covid-19 restrictions to contend with. Despite these challenges, our students stayed strong and have persisted with their learning when they could and embraced our help when things got too hard. What was evident was how much each student appreciated someone from the school checking in just to remind them we were present for them.

Our strategic focus since 2019 has been to create a whole school culture of high expectations and deepen our staff and students' sense of belonging. With this at the forefront of mind, we started the year together where we began with the great work of a whole school approach to staff wellbeing and teaching and learning. At the retreat, we built upon the framework for school belonging through the development of a staff wellbeing model that is informed by positive psychology as well as launching the digital one to one student iPad program that we had been working toward the previous year. As we look back at 2020, these initiatives were what sustained and enabled us to support our students and each other throughout the year.

Covid-19 forced our digital learning program into fast forward and we spent the year offering great professional learning opportunities to all staff through on-line gatherings. For the first time we could hold cross campus meetings easily without disruptions to student learning. We spent the year focusing on many collaborative projects that have grown and been enriched by our ability to collaborate more often and more easily. What emerged was just how much wisdom and staff expertise we were able to share and will now continue to be shared through this exciting digital platform.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to all staff; I feel so very humbled, grateful and privileged to lead such a passionate and skilful team who hold students at the centre of all that we do.

I would also like to express my deep gratitude for our philanthropic team at Berry Street who have supported the school throughout the year by raising much needed funds.

The following organisations have made a positive impact on the lives of the young people who attend our school:

Pathways

Barr Family Foundation, Williams Fund (Australian Community Foundation), Ward Ambler Foundation

Ballarat Campus

Scobie & Claire MacKinnon Trust

Shepparton Campus

Hazel Peat Perpetual Charitable Fund

Morwell Campus

ENERGYAUSTRALIA, Tee Up for Kids

As a result of your support, young people can access resources that support them in their learning to be the best they can be.

2020 has both challenged us and equally offered us opportunities to grow and live into our highest potential.



CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDENT BODY

In August of 2020, 183 students were enrolled across four campuses:

Noble Park

37 students

10 girls and 27 boys, including 4 Indigenous students - 2 males, 2 females

Morwell

57 students

26 girls and 31 boys, including 7 Indigenous students - 6 males, 1 female

Shepparton

42 students

17 girls and 25 boys, including 10 Indigenous students - 7 males, 3 females.

Ballarat

47 students

26 girls and 21 boys, including 8 Indigenous students - 3 males, 5 females

This compares with a total enrolment of 162 students across the four campuses in August of 2019.

OUR CONTEXT, OUR STUDENTS

The Berry Street School began in 2003 at the Noble Park campus and has grown into a multi-campus independent school which serves the community in which they are located. Our campuses at Morwell, Ballarat, Noble Park and Shepparton support enrolled young people aged 11–20 years, and we also offer continued support for our alumni in our pathways program.

The school is governed by Berry Street and was created to support young people who have been marginalised by the mainstream education system. The student population all need extensive levels of support to help them engage fully in rich learning opportunities. Young people who attend the Berry Street School have been marginalised for many systemic reasons; we are committed to ensuring the gap is closed and students experience personal and academic success through individualised educational plans. Our students are supported to embrace and celebrate their identity and identify the challenges they have experienced as leverage for future success.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students make up 16% of our school population and as such cultural identity and reconciliation is strongly represented in our program. In 2020 we began the process of developing our Reconciliation Action Plan with Narragunnawali.

Morwell Campus

Morwell campus is a bright and dynamic campus within walking distance from the train station and the regional bus stop. The campus bus service also picks up students for those who need it. The campus has a large food technology kitchen and art room as well as a multi-use common area. Students attend from the Latrobe Valley region. The campus offers years 7-10 Victorian curriculum and Senior Secondary VCAL and VET programs. Vjay is the campus dog who helps students with their learning. He loves to say hello to every visitor to the campus and looks after the students vigilantly.

Shepparton Campus

Shepparton campus is in a bush setting surrounded by gum trees and pastureland several kilometres from the main township of Shepparton. Most students are supported by our school bus pick up and drop off service. The stunning bush setting contributes to both student and staff wellbeing with all enjoying the natural setting. The campus has a strong outdoor education program and a basketball court which is very popular at recess and lunch times. It offers years 7-10 Victorian curriculum and Senior Secondary VCAL and VET programs.

Ballarat Campus

Ballarat campus is relatively new opening in 2017 and is in Sebastopol. It is set in a residential area and offers years 7-10 Victorian curriculum together with a vibrant Senior and Secondary VCAL and VET program. The facilities include a large dining/community gathering space as well as an outdoor basketball area and a much-loved chicken coup. Phoebe and Poppy are the campus dogs who enjoy all the classrooms and helping children with their learning. Their favourite place is the library.

Noble Park Campus

Noble Park Campus is located in an industrial area and has been identified as needing to be relocated. The campus has two dogs who alternate in supporting students. Comet and Lochie are very much loved by the staff and students. Staff have made a particular effort to make the most of the current building, creating exciting and inviting classrooms that support the learning of all students. It offers years 7-10 Victorian curriculum and VCAL and VET program courses.

We continue to monitor student pathways after they have graduated. Many of our students leave the school to work in a range of industries across the community.

BERRY STREET EDUCATION MODEL - POSITIVE EDUCATION AND THERAPEUTIC APPROACH

We use the Berry Street Educational Model (BSEM) to inform our teaching practice. BSEM provides staff with strategies to help build and maintain positive relationships which are foundational to our program. The BSEM is trauma-aware and informed by positive psychology. It supports an education program which encompasses a structured vision of wellbeing in the school community.

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, improve learning outcomes, and nurture relationships.

“The Berry Street School has been life changing for Alex and the whole family. He has been engaged in his learning and has been happy coming to school. The thing I admire is you don’t have to change how Alex learns, you (the school) have modified how you teach him.”
Nicole Simmonds
 mother of Alex



TEACHING AND LEARNING AT THE BERRY STREET SCHOOL IN 2020

This year was quite a year for the Berry Street School and the world. Despite facing many obstacles due to the Covid-19 pandemic, this year at the school showed that staff, students and families can thrive, achieve and belong when working together as a team and community.

High Expectations

The Reading Without Limits and Maths Pathway curriculums continued in 2020 with students showing love of learning as they continued to read books and tackle rich maths learning. Both programs come together with similar themes that encapsulate our teaching and learning beliefs:

- With accurate diagnostics and assessments, our teaching is data-informed
- We believe all young people are on a developmental continuum and as such we target our teaching to what the young person needs
- We build our students' learning with skills that will help them lead independent and successful lives such as supporting students to build their stamina for learning

Each student at the school was provided an iPad device in 2020. When the government announced the first lockdown, the school pivoted, and during Term One School Holidays devised an entire remote learning program for all students so we could continue supporting students to have a high quality education. During the first lockdown, we distributed devices to every student, ensuring that all students had the technology, software and data they needed to continue their education. Some teachers elected to teach our specialist classes, working with students across all four campuses for the first time. We delivered English, Mathematics, Arts, Technologies, Physical Education and Wellbeing, and VCAL classes remotely. We also connected with students regularly through Zoom for health and wellbeing checks. After the first lockdown lifted, our passionate staff and students returned to on-site learning for the rest of the year. Our belief is that students thrive, achieve, and belong when working together. As a result, our doors were open for our community of learners. Both our remote learning program and open doors showed our relentless belief in all students and their potential.

The Berry Street School also has high expectations for our community, and as such, we continued to develop our school's Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) so we can implement reconciliation in the classroom, school yard and greater community. Due to the impacts of Covid-19, our school's RAP launch was delayed and will officially be in October 2021.

"This is the best school that I have attended, before, I was always kicked out of every class.

My teachers want to help me learn."

Bek, student at the Berry Street School

Personalised Learning

In 2020, after much reflection, we revamped our Individual Education Plans (IEPs) so that all students had targeted, data-informed and specific goals that could be achieved within three weeks. We digitalised our IEPs so all of our IEP data is kept on one system. This means that staff, families and students can easily see how IEP goals are progressing over time. We also instituted school-wide Student Support Group (SSG) meetings a minimum of four times per year so that our staff and students could communicate their progress and IEP goals with each student's support group and family. In 2020, the school was also excited to incorporate two new data measures: The F-12 Writing Continuum and the F-12 Speaking and Learning Rubric built by the expert team of teachers and lead teachers at the school. Both of these measures allow teachers to determine the exact writing, speaking and listening needs of each student so IEP goals can be targeted and specific.

Hands-On Learning

We recognise how important hands-on learning is, and as such the school continued to offer integrated afternoon hands-on learning classes. These classes provided formal time for hands-on opportunities to develop social emotional skills, personal development skills, work related skills, and real life opportunities to apply English and Mathematics. In 2020, we also continued to explore ways that students can use technology to build creative and critical thinking. We partnered with Education Advantage in order to get cutting edge professional learning on best practices for using iPads in the classroom. For instance, our passionate staff learnt how to incorporate movie making and podcasts into their lesson plans. We also believe that students learn best when doing. Our maths classrooms are full of rich hands-on resources and our English curriculum is strongly connected to our beautiful and diverse libraries. We look forward to more hands-on learning opportunities in 2021.

A Calm and Caring Environment

We recognise the impacts of Covid-19 on student wellbeing and the urgent need to support young people during this crisis. As a result, we increased outreach, home visits, and virtual check-ins throughout the year. We continued to focus on the integration of wellbeing and learning in the classroom through our Berry Street Education Model (BSEM). We know that young people who are safe, happy and healthy will learn better, and as a result we focused our BSEM learning on developing more capacity in restorative justice and collaborative problem solving. In 2021, we will be excited to get even more consultative support from the BSEM team to ensure that our students are thriving, achieving and belonging in calm and caring classrooms.



Maddie Witter

Deputy Principal
of Teaching and Learning
at the Berry Street School



STAFF PROFILES OF OUR ANIMAL ASSISTED EDUCATION

Poppy

Poppy is a beautiful 3 year old Labradoodle who is only new to her role as an animal assisted education dog. She looks forward to Tuesdays and Fridays when she accompanies her mum to school for the day. She loves her zoomies around the school yard before the students arrive and then snuggling on the couch with whoever needs some extra attention and support, whether that be a student or staff member. It's wonderful to watch the connections she is developing with each of the students which helps them feel safe and supported at school.

Phoebe

Phoebe is a Golden Retriever Education Assistance Dog trained and generously donated by Assistance Dogs Australia. She helps students to feel calm and be ready to learn. She enjoys reading with students and cuddling up with them for a pat and a nap. At break times, Phoebe specialises in sneaky snacking, and is often seen sitting in front of students with the golden retriever stare. She greets every guest to the school with excitement and love. Thank you Phoebe for making our days brighter.

Comet

Comet is a 9-year-old Cavoodle, with a hint of Spaniel, that loves cuddles and chasing the ball at the Noble Park campus. Comet loves working with the young people when they are having a tough day or need help focusing on their learning. He is known to steal a bit of toast from time to time and loves to help expend energy by doing zoomies up and down the campus. Thank you Comet for bringing lots of love to our school!

Lochie

Lochie has a talent for reading a room and seeing which student, parent or staff member needs a cuddle or a play. His favourite things are playing tug, diving into bean bags, races down the hallway, climbing into laps (even though he weighs 30kg) and sitting at the table like a human. After growing up on the streets, Lochie gives and receives more love than he could ever have hoped for from his new family of students and staff at the Berry Street School.

Vijay

In Vijay's role as an animal assisted therapy dog, he brings joy and humour to the campus everyday. He specialises in curling up at the feet of students in class making them feel safe and accepted. He also specialises in PE and supports student fitness by stealing the balls they are playing with and making them chase him. Thank you Vijay for everything that you do!



GROWING GREAT READERS AT THE BERRY STREET SCHOOL

The Berry Street School is committed to being an inclusive, outward facing organisation where we support the greater educational community. As such, it's important to us that we link to other schools in leading best practice for teaching and learning where all young people can thrive. Through our work with BSEM, we know that reading can help heal trauma. For instance, students are able to build their social-emotional skills through analysis of characters in stories before turning that work inward. Also, the impact of building stamina for learning, which we do through our Reading Without Limits program, helps build resilience, perseverance, agency and self-efficacy. Books are important to our school.

The Berry Street School partnered with The Little Bookroom, a Melbourne bookshop, to create a highly cultivated, trauma-aware, culturally responsive and student friendly library. The Reading Without Limits program places a lot of emphasis on having classroom libraries that are contemporary, engaging, and varied across genres, interests and levels. Michael Earp and Leesa Lambert helped build the cultivated libraries for the Berry Street School in 2020. The Berry Street School and Reading Without Limits library book collection is now posted on The Little Bookroom's website. It's regularly purchased by schools around the country looking to build their trauma aware practice. Both Michael and Leesa are leaders in children's books and publishing across the world, and since our partnership, the bookshop is committed to focusing on healing trauma in their work. Our partnership with The Little Bookroom has helped our school build relationships with the wider education community as many schools across Australia have purchased from our highly cultivated reading list.

Hello Leesa and Michael. Tell us a bit about yourselves?

Hello! First off, we're the same age, and immediately bonded when we met over a series we both read and loved in primary school, Teen Power Inc. by Emily Rodda. We became fast friends and knew we wanted to work together. Leesa has owned The Little Bookroom for 12 years with her parents having worked in the shop for 4 years already. Michael has worked selling children's and young adult books for 17 years both in bookshops and for a publisher. He joined The Little Bookroom nearly 4 years ago. We're both passionate about children's and young adult books and feel so incredibly lucky to be doing the job we are. Michael even studied teaching, but decided books were more his thing. Now he writes books as well as sells them.



In what ways have you been working with the Berry Street School?

We've been working to build the Berry Street School libraries with the best range of books we can, making sure that readers of all kinds are thought of and catered for. We really wanted the genres and topics covered to be as far reaching as possible so that almost anyone could find something to interest them. We've got a lot of experience knowing what readers like, and so are able to focus on good quality and popular titles, while also being big readers ourselves, so including our own personal recommendations. We've had requests from teachers at the school with what specific students are interested in and so sourced books on all sorts of topics.

In what ways do you think reading might change lives?

A reader lives a thousand lives before he dies. The [person] who never reads lives only one. - **George R. R. Martin.**

We genuinely believe that books have incredible power. Through them you can see reflections of yourself and others. You learn about the world and your place in it, all the possibility you hold. They have the power to make you feel almost any emotion, to quiet your heart or cause an uprising. Seriously, books are awesome!

Has a book changed your life/lives?

Leesa says her book addiction started with the Saddle Club. Her Grandfather would take her to the bookshop regularly as a child and it was the highlight of her week getting a new Saddle Club. The horses hooked her, and she wanted more! That set her on a path to be the bookshop owner she is today.

Michael was given *The Red Tree* by Shaun Tan for his 18th birthday. It blew his mind that a picture book could be so powerful, so right for him as a teenager. It made him see the potential of children's books and desperately want to work with them, and write them.

Do you have a message for the young people at the Berry Street School?

If you've got a passion for something, find a book about it. Follow your curiosity and once you've found what books can do for you specifically, you'll see how much they hold. It really is opening a world of possibility, and one you can make work for you.

We've had so much joy working on this project with the Berry Street School. We really hope you find a gem or two. And if you want more, just let your teachers know.



"I now love reading because I can choose the books that interest me and share my passion with others."

Evelyn, student at the Berry Street School

“Staff act with consistency and support towards our young people. They model being honest, supportive, and true to oneself, even in challenging situations.”
Eden, teacher

STUDENT WELLBEING

A focus on student wellbeing to support learning informs everything we do at the Berry Street School. Wellbeing is feeling well to do well. Our aim is to teach the skills of wellbeing so that students can build on their resiliency and can use wellbeing strategies that support them to meet any learning challenges with persistence and stamina. We know that when young people develop wellbeing literacy and wellbeing skills to understand their own emotions, they feel engaged, nurture relationships and find meaning in learning and accomplishment. Ultimately, they are then able to thrive, achieve and belong and use these strategies in their chosen pathways in life.

Our wellbeing approach stems from the Berry Street Education Model (BSEM) which is both trauma informed and uses the science of positive psychology. BSEM has shown us that everything we do in the school can be dual purpose: every opportunity for learning is also an opportunity to practice wellbeing. We emphasise physical health, strong relationships and restorative practices, stamina for learning, engagement and goal-setting, and ensuring that each student knows their character strengths and has many opportunities to practice them.

Wellbeing check in

At enrolment, every student is provided with assessments that will help staff develop an understanding of how best to support the student’s learning needs. Each campus has wellbeing staff who are dedicated to ensuring we use a holistic approach in supporting the learning journey of the student. We include the family and carers in the support plan and encourage students to advocate for themselves and their needs. Students themselves check in each day with their readiness to learn, which indicates how they are going and whether they need support throughout the day.

Focus Plans

To help students develop self-advocacy, students in partnership with school staff create their own focus plans. The focus plan details the goals for improving student self-management, regulation and positive social interaction. It details the triggers for anger or anxiety, the known responses to the triggers, and strategies the student will use to regulate and de-escalate. Focus plans are created by the student together with the teacher and wellbeing staff. It also allows the staff to hear from the student about what happens internally for the student that staff don’t see. The focus plan is a living document that can be adjusted as the student sees fit, sometimes after strategies don’t work. Students as a result might develop new ones that assist better regulation; having it as a living document allows continual growth. Focus plans are placed on the student’s desk where it helps remind students of their chosen strategies for de-escalation. Having the strategies visible for all also allows the adults in the room to support students’ regulation if they notice a student becoming dysregulated.

Student support groups

At the start of each term we conduct student support group meetings (SSGs). These meetings are opportunities for the student's voice to be heard together with sharing knowledge from and with families about how best the school can support the student in their chosen learning pathway. Our SSGs give us the opportunity to deepen the sense of belonging by sharing the student's success and aspirations. It is also a time of review and reflection to refine our and the student's approach, strategies and mindset to learning. These meetings are conducted with the student's voice at the centre together with a wellbeing staff member, teacher and member of campus leadership.

The Berry Street School's holistic wellbeing focus is grounded in a relational approach underpinned by unconditional positive regard for the child and their families/carers. We believe in the importance of strong healthy learning partnerships that value kindness, compassion and understanding. Our student wellbeing philosophy is deeply connected to our values of thrive, achieve belong.





TORI'S STORY

Over the past 3 years at the Berry Street School, Tori* has grown and healed from her past experiences into a calm, engaging and future focused young person.

After experiencing family violence and loss of a family member, betrayal and sexual assault, Tori struggled to build trusting relationships with adults. Her guilt, shame and anger led to violent outbursts and damaging property.

Like many of our young people at the Berry Street School, Tori came to us while experiencing complex trauma. Still struggling to process the loss of a loved one and a sense of shame over her sexual assault at the hands of a trusted adult, Tori was left emotionally raw and distrustful of everyone.

She was disengaged from her learning, and was engaging in substance use and dangerous behaviours to manage her emotions. Tori sought out conflict with staff and students in order to take some control over her environment, which led to regular violent and destructive outbursts. This left Tori emotionally drained and trapped in an even deeper spiral of shame. Tori desperately wanted to be seen for her intellectual curiosity, quick wit and kindness, but hid these things under a protective shell of aggression.

Slowly building trust

The Berry Street School staff team slowly built trust with Tori, through persistent kindness, patience and unconditional positive regard (that is, being kind and compassionate towards others and ourselves). Like many of our young people, Tori is easy to like, with a wonderful sense of humour and unique perspective on the world. However, it took her time to trust that our attempts to get to know her and see her for all her strengths were genuine.

As time passed, Tori built connections with staff over her interests, shared experiences of facing fears and personal best achievements on excursions, and success and growth in the classroom. Tori progressed from sporadic attendance and leaving school angrily by 11am each day, to attending full days. She demonstrated years of growth in her reading and mathematics and exhibited leadership on school excursions, winning one of our school awards.

Hope for the future

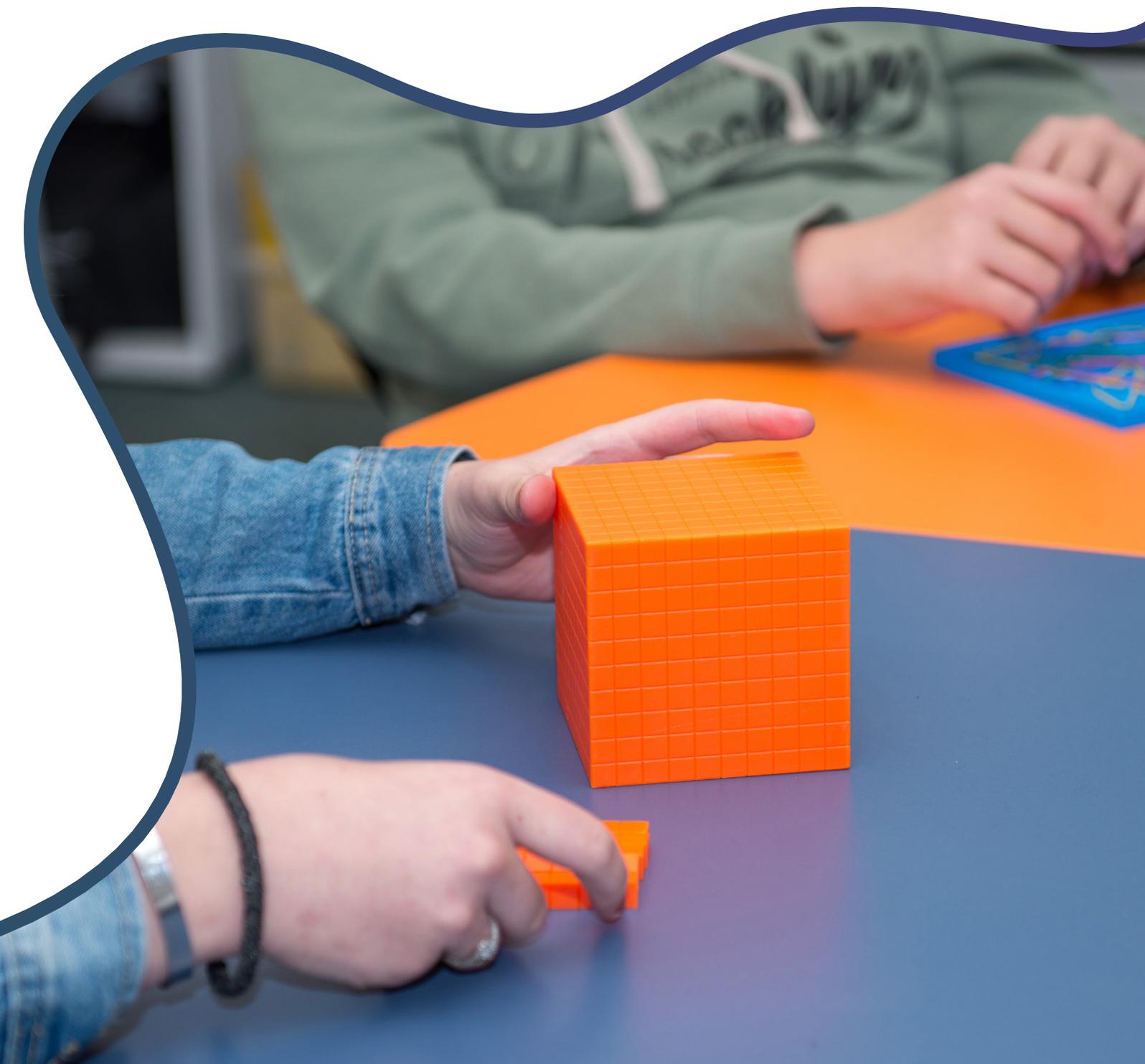
Now Tori is working towards her Intermediate VCAL Certificate, with the goal of becoming a chef. She actively engages with new people and welcomes others into the school. Tori is always there to share a joke or talk about music, ideas and of course, food. Tori is open to speaking with others about the challenges she has faced and manages her emotions through self-knowledge and the self-regulation skills she has learnt. Tori can now avoid and heal conflict, and she holds hope for the future. Most importantly, she experiences the unique joy that comes from hard work and success each day at the Berry Street School.

Through her own perseverance and hard work, Tori has learned to manage her emotions, focus on her learning and has high hopes for the future.

* student's name has been changed to protect privacy

SUZY'S STORY

Suzy* started at the Berry Street School Morwell Campus at the beginning of 2020, just after she had turned 15. She had been living in residential care for the previous year and had significant mental health issues stemming from abuse and neglect at home. Suzy was previously enrolled in a mainstream secondary school, but her attendance declined along with her mental health, and she spent time in Secure Welfare. Then she never returned to school. In previous educational needs assessments, Suzy reported she has always found learning difficult, like everyone else in her family.



An education case manager referred Suzy to the Berry Street School at the beginning of 2020.

When Suzy joined the Berry Street School, she slowly connected with her teachers in a supportive, educational environment. Suzy's focus plan, completed with the support of her teachers, identified her specific needs to learn, engage and stay focused. To stay focused in the classroom, Suzy identified that taking a short, five-minute break outside, often kicking a soccer ball with her Teacher or Education Support Worker, enabled her to feel calm and ready to learn when she returned to the classroom. Suzy was able to identify her triggers and apply strategies to regulate herself during class time.

Suzy enjoyed the predictable rhythms of the school day and her attendance at school reflected her commitment to learning. Her attendance was in the 76th percentile, higher than it had ever been in any other school setting. Suzy's schedule, learning intentions and success criteria for each lesson was displayed in the classroom providing her with a safe, predictable routine each day. Suzy formed positive relationships with her teachers and was happy to work both independently and work side by side with them. Suzy's fantastic attendance led to strong academic growth in Literacy and Numeracy during the school year.

Suzy made strong connections with her class peers and became a valued member of our learning community. The positive relationships that she formed with her peers enabled Suzy to enjoy the social aspects of belonging to a school community. Suzy demonstrated her strong connections by offering support to her friends during a Covid-19 pandemic and working in teams. Suzy participated in extracurricular activities offered on the campus and would often team up with her new friendship group. It was lovely to see the friendship continue outside the classroom, too.

Suzy's teachers ensured that the curriculum opportunities that were offered catered for her learning needs. Suzy's teachers set IEP SMART goals every three weeks, and she was able to experience positive accomplishment in her learning with the support of her teachers. Suzy completed regular Fountas and Pinnell reading assessments and her teachers were able to specifically cater for her academic levels. Through guided and shared reading practice, Suzy was able to make significant growth during the year. Suzy participated in book studies, persuasive and narrative writing, passion projects and oral presentations using Keynote on her iPad. Her learning was celebrated, and process praised offered. In Numeracy, through regular diagnostic testing in Maths Pathways, Suzy worked through modules specifically catering for her academic needs. Testing occurred fortnightly and reflection was through one-to-one feedback.

Suzy is working on completing her VCAL Intermediate Certificate, already completing her First Aid Certificate and White Card Training. She is establishing a career pathway of becoming a Diesel Mechanic or a photographer in the future.

* student's name has been changed to protect privacy

THE BERRY STREET SCHOOL EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

In addition to our thriving academic and wellbeing programs, the four campuses offered enriching school experiences for young people including:

Morwell		
Excursions	Incursions	Community Events
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blue Rock Dam Excursions (Stand Up Paddle Boarding) Sport Excursion – Tennis Courts, Gym 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health Nurse Incursion – Corina 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NAIDOC Week – Visiting Elders, smoking ceremony, yarning circle and hand painting Tech School Visits – Morwell Tech Work Placement, Work Experience and Work Training in painting, hairdressing and various other trades

Noble Park		
Excursions	Incursions	Community Events
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership with the Heide Museum; art and design-based excursions Workshops with Bunnings Excursion to Melbourne Cable Park Excursion to Waves Leisure centre Excursion to local community park for a Barbeque Tree-surfing excursion Bowling excursion Excursion to hoMie (social enterprise) and Italian restaurant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership with the Heide Museum; art and design-based incursions National Institute of Education and Technology (NIET) VET short courses L2P Driving Program Interactive online excursions during Covid-19 San Diego Zoo, Music festivals, innovative farms and mars through the eyes of the Mars rover Dogs for Life Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Halloween celebration designed and led by VCAL students Youth Support and Advocacy Services (YSAS) Partnerships and in-house visits



Shepparton

Excursions	Incursions	Community Events
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excursions to local pools, ovals, facilities and stadiums for sport and Outdoor Ed • Nagambie Lakes • Billabong Ranch • Kaiela Art Gallery • Belstack Strawberry Farm • Murchison Pool • Avenal Maze • Bright and Myrtleford excursion • Mt Major hike 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online career sessions through local careers network • Cybersafety talk with local police and youth organisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit to Shepparton Villages Aged care facility • Volunteer at Local Primary School Sport days • Plunket’s Orchard Industry Tour • Shepparton News Industry Tour • PDS community resource challenge – Included visits to local Community Support Agencies • Reconciliation week activity day with Kalun Atkinson and Aunty Pam

Ballarat

Excursions	Incursions	Community Events
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yarrowee River Trails – Walking and Bike riding • Eureka Pool Swimming • Xtreme Bounce Trampolining • Iron Oak Gym • Tennis Ballarat • Eureka Mini Golf • METEC Driver Education Centre, Croydon • Ballarat Art Gallery • Mitre 10 • Creswick St George Lake • Ballarat Ten Pin Bowling • Prisoner of War Memorial • The Arch – War Memorial • Street Art in Ballarat • Ballarat Library • Sebastopol Library 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pathways Information Evening : Highlands LLEN, Victorian Chamber of Industry School Based Apprenticeships, HandyGirl Australia • Child and Family Services (CAFS) Gamblers Help Community Education • RoadSmart Education Program • Ballarat Community Health Healthy eating online workshop • Highlands LLEN Youth Engagement Officer - Outreach • Fit 2 Drive On Line workshop • Ballarat and District Aboriginal Co-op 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pop Up Shop Retail Experience VCAL VET program with Gen U Training • Launch Hands On Learning Community Garden Project Visit by Federal MP for Ballarat Hon. Catherine King • Food Hamper Program – Ballarat Foundation • Staff Student Basketball • Footy Colours Day • Are you Ok Day





STAFF WELLBEING

Staff wellbeing at the Berry Street School is a key aspect of our positive school culture which is vital to creating positive learning partnerships with students many of whom have had negative experiences in school. Staff were encouraged to participate in the opportunities to practice the skills of wellbeing so that we can all live to our mantra of thrive, achieve and belong. The staff wellbeing thread held our campuses together during a challenging year.

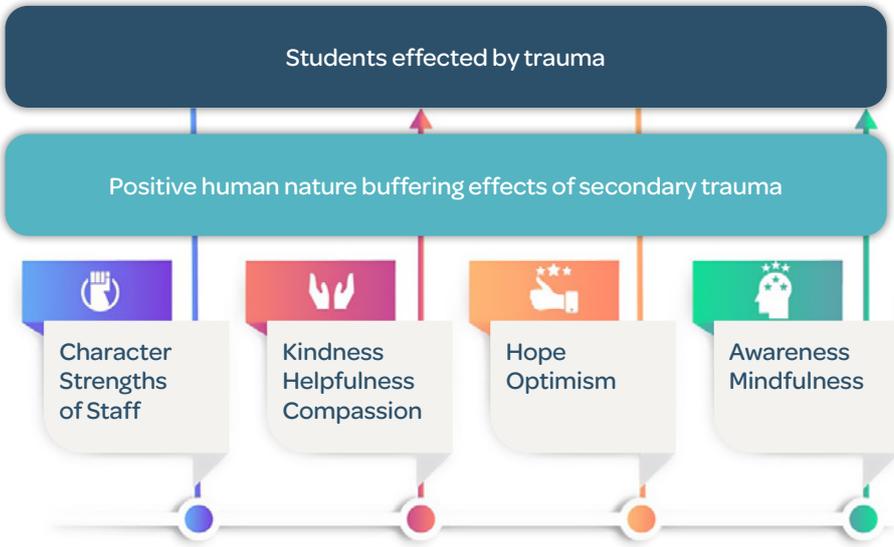
The Sustainable Leadership staff wellbeing model was launched at the beginning of 2020. It is a wellbeing framework informed by the science of positive psychology. The model echoed components of the Berry Street Education Model which helped staff feel familiar with the language and wellbeing skills. We began the year committed to prioritising time in the day to staff wellbeing initiatives. This proved to be vital in supporting how we were able to show up each day energised to support our vulnerable students during the multiple lockdowns.

We remained opened during each lock down to ensure we supported vulnerable students. Staff got creative about how they could prioritise their wellbeing in community so that they could do the important work of supporting our students.

“I love that everyone at the Morwell Campus holds high expectations of each other - both staff and students. There is always an explanation for actions and promises are always followed through.”

Eliza, teacher





BERRY STREET IS COMMITTED TO BEING A CHILD SAFE ORGANISATION

Many of the children and young people we support have experienced abuse, neglect or trauma during childhood. That's why they find themselves at Berry Street. Central to our work is providing them with a safe, nurturing environment and the support and opportunities to heal and grow.

We are committed to being a child safe, child friendly and child empowering organisation. We recognise, respect and promote children's rights within Berry Street and the broader community. We require that every person that is part of this organisation, every Board Member, staff member, carer and volunteer treats the rights, interests and safety of children as paramount.

As both a past and a current provider of care, Berry Street takes seriously the lessons it has learnt from when its past care practices were neither child safe nor child friendly. We maintain a commitment to support and advocate for past clients including Forgotten Australians, the Stolen Generations and care leavers.



There is zero tolerance for any form of child abuse or maltreatment within the organisation and zero tolerance for not reporting any suspected abuse or maltreatment both internally and to external authorities including Police and Child Protection. In everything we do we seek to protect children; we listen and respond if harm or abuse occurs and remain open, honest and transparent about any failings.

Berry Street works with groups of children and young people who may be particularly vulnerable to abuse.

Accordingly Berry Street pays particular attention to:

- The safety of children in out of home care
- The cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children
- The cultural safety of children from culturally &/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- The safety of children with a disability
- The safety of children who identify with a sexual minority identity and/or gender minority identity.

We are committed to preventing abuse by identifying risks children may face in different settings and reducing and removing those risks. We know that children, including those in our care, can be vulnerable to abuse and exploitation online.

We understand that ongoing education of staff, carers and volunteers on the risks to children and child safe practices, behaviours and boundaries is central to being a child safe organisation.

As a child safe organisation Berry Street:

- Has zero tolerance for failing to report suspected abuse
- Works to maintain environments where children are safe, respected, listened to, their views valued and their concerns acted upon
- Is proactive in assessing and managing risks of abuse to children
- Listens and responds to all complaints and allegations of abuse
- Works according to Victoria's Child Safe Standards and Principles
- Has clear policies and procedures in place to enable us to meet our commitments as a Child Safe Organisation.

If you would like to more information about Berry Street's child safe commitment or would like to raise a concern you can email childsafety@berrystreet.org.au or call our Child Safe Officer.

**“Whenever we work together,
we all care for each other.”**
Phillip, VCAL student

A woman with dark hair tied back, wearing a light grey sweater, is shown in profile from the chest up. She is holding a white marker with an orange cap and is writing on a whiteboard. The whiteboard has some faint, illegible markings. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be a classroom or meeting room with other people. A large, overlapping yellow circle is superimposed on the right side of the image, containing the text.

**“I have formed strong,
trusting relationships
with all staff members.”**
Amy, student at
the Berry Street School

STAFF AT THE BERRY STREET SCHOOL 2020 AS REPORTED ON CENSUS

In 2020, a total of 60.5 FTE staff were employed at the Berry Street School.

	Whole School Role	Noble Park Campus	Morwell Campus	Shepparton Campus	Ballarat Campus
Director of Education and Principal	1.5				
Deputy Principal Teaching and Learning	0.8				
Assistant Principal		1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Lead Teacher	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Teachers		4.9	6.0	5.8	5.8
Wellbeing Leader and support		1.0	3.5	2.0	1.6
Education Support		1.2	2.6	2.0	1.0
Admin	1.0	0.4	0.8	0.8	0.4
Total	4.3	9.5	14.9	12	10.8

All teachers are fully qualified with VIT registration. The high ratio of 1 teaching staff for 6 students reflects Berry Street's belief that our students require specialist, individual support in order to support their educational progress.

Professional development is important to the Berry Street School. As such, staff participated in a myriad of professional learning experiences including:

1. A School Retreat at the start of the year
2. The Berry Street Education Model
3. Reading Without Limits
4. Maths Pathway
5. VCAL Best Practices and Quality Assurance
6. Theory U and Collective Leadership
7. Harvard Certificate in School Leadership
8. CERT IV Training and Assessment
9. Culturally Responsive Practice delivered by VACCA
10. Data Driven Schools

**STAFFING AS OF
NOVEMBER 2020**

The Berry Street School is one of the statewide services delivered by Berry Street. Our four campus school is led by a school leadership team including the school’s Principal, a teaching and learning team that supports all four campuses, and Assistant Principals at each campus. Each campus’s leadership team includes the campus Assistant Principal, the campus Lead Teacher, and the campus Wellbeing Leader. Based on the unique needs of each campus, including the number of students at each campus, the school employs teachers, education support staff, VCAL co-ordinators, and wellbeing staff at a range of total full time equivalencies.

CEO
Michael Perusco

Acting Executive Director Statewide Services
Annette Jackson

Principal
Joanne Alford

Assistant Principal Noble Park
Amy Mazzitelli

Assistant Principal Morwell
Rebecca Robinson

Administrative Support
1.00 FTE

Administrative Support
0.8 FTE

Lead Teacher
1.00 FTE

Wellbeing Leader
1.00 FTE

Lead Teacher
1.00 FTE

Wellbeing Leader
1.00 FTE

VCAL Co-Ordinator
1.00 FTE

Wellbeing Staff
1.00 FTE

VCAL Co-Ordinator
1.00 FTE

Wellbeing Staff
1.9 FTE

Teachers
3.6 FTE

Teachers
6.00 FTE

Education Support Staff
1.4 FTE

Education Support Staff
2.4 FTE

Assistant Principal Shepparton Teresa Deshon		Assistant Principal Ballarat Damian McKee		Deputy Principal Whole School Teaching and Learning Maddie Witter
Administrative Support 0.8 FTE		Administrative Support 0.4 FTE		Lead Teacher Data Org Whole School 1.00 FTE Lead Teacher Teaching and Learning 1.00 FTE
Lead Teacher 1.00 FTE	Wellbeing Leader 1.00 FTE	Lead Teacher 1.00 FTE	Wellbeing Leader 1.00 FTE	
VCAL Co-Ordinator 1.00 FTE	Wellbeing Staff 0.8 FTE	VCAL Co-Ordinator 1.00 FTE	Wellbeing Staff 0.6 FTE	
Teachers 4.8 FTE		Teachers 4.4 FTE		
Education Support Staff 2.2 FTE		Education Support Staff 2.6 FTE		

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE DATA SUMMARY

The following shares our VCAL and Pathways Program data for 2020.

2020 Pathways Data	
Total number of students enrolled in their 1st year VCAL in 2020	30*
Total number of students enrolled in 2nd or third year VCAL in 2020	29*
Total number of students with successful VCAL completions in 2020	3
Total number of students enrolled in accredited courses/VET UOC in 2020	54
Total number of students with successful accredited course/VET UOC completions in 2020	30
Total number of students enrolled in VET qualifications in 2020	21
Total number of students with successful VET qualification completions in 2020	2
Total number of students participated in SBAT's in 2020	0
Total number of successful SBAT completions in 2020	0
Total number of students participated in workplace visits in 2020	33
Total number of students who undertook work experience placements in 2020	2
Total number of students that volunteered in 2020	6
Total number of students that participated in WOW or workplace day events in 2020	0
Total number of students that participated in \$20BOSS in 2020	0
Total number of students exiting the school in Term 4 2020 who are 15 years + and who have attended the school for more than one year	26
Total number of students exiting the school throughout 2020 who are 15 years + and who have attended the school for more than one year	35
Total number of students exiting the school throughout 2020 who were disengaged or who do not have a specified reason for leaving	10 (including 1 remanded)
Total number of 2020 exiting students enrolled in TAFE or vocational program for 2021 (who are 15 years + and have attended the school for more than one year)	9
Total number of 2020 exiting students who will be employed in 2021	5 (2 of these are carers for family members)
Total number of 2020 exiting students transferring to another school for 2021 who are 15 years plus with 1+ year attendance	5
Total number of exiting students being supported by outside agencies to find education or work pathways for 2021 who are 15+ with 1+ year attendance	2
Total number of 2020 exiting students relocating to other areas in 2021 who are 15+ with 1+ year attendance	4

“The VCAL program is fantastic enabling my daughter to transition in her own time from school to TAFE and work whilst still having the academic and wellbeing support of the staff.”

**Tara, parent of Silva, a student at
the Berry Street School**

FINANCIAL REPORT YEAR END 31 DECEMBER 2020

Revenue from Operating activities	\$
Private Income	20,069
Donations	264,525
State Govt Recurrent Grants	2,306,406
Commonwealth Government General Recurrent Grants Program	6,874,953
School Assistance Targeted Programs Grants	14,555
Job Keeper	1,372,200
Total revenue	10,852,707
Expenses from operating activities	
General Teaching Staff	4,131,608
Salaries All Other Staff	584,157
Other Staff Related Expenses	225,022
Superannuation	442,892
LSL	73,594
Total salaries	5,457,274
Operating Expenses	2,201,352
Building & Grounds Operations	281,263
Rent and Lease Expenses	230,941
Depreciation	33
Total non-salaries	2,713,589
Total expenses	8,170,863
School capital expenditure commitments	1,309,644
Total operating surplus	1,372,200

Certification by CEO

I hereby certify that the above statement gives a true and fair view of the income expenditure of the Berry Street School Program for the period indicated and that funds have been used in accordance with the Service Delivery Agreement.



Michael Perusco
Chief Executive Officer
29th June 2021

OUR VISION

OUR SCHOOL

OUR TEACHING AND LEARNING

OUR STAFF

FINANCIAL REPORT

OUR FUTURE



Joanne Alford
Principal

FUTURE FOCUS

Last year we identified so many new initiatives that we hoped we would action in 2020, and we are happy to say that we have achieved each of our future focus objectives identified last year. We are now very confident using the new student management system and our one to one student iPad program. Both certainly supported student learning during Covid-19. Our staff wellbeing model was a priority throughout 2020, and it helped us all stay grounded during challenging times of lockdowns due to the pandemic.

The thread of our values thrive, achieve and belong guide us toward 2021 as we all work together for growth and continual improvement.

Looking forward to 2021 we will be focused on further developing our school Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) so that we can officially launch our plan across the school to foster a high level of knowledge and pride in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and contributions. This plan will be such an important step in the school's evolution toward supporting both our Indigenous and Non-Indigenous students. Also, it will give staff the opportunity to grow in their knowledge and be in a position to support social change.

A major focus will be the renovations at Shepparton campus which will give students and teachers more flexibility to work outside in all-weather. Also, two extra classrooms are planned to be built which will provide greater class capacity.

We are looking at increasing classrooms at the Ballarat campus to support the needs of the students. This need is quite urgent and may require a quick resolution of school portables.

Our big capital project next year will be moving the Noble Park campus to a site in Narre Warren. This move will give the staff at Noble Park campus greater capacity to connect and reach more students. It will also provide staff and students more flexible learning opportunities in a building that will be purpose built for the needs of the students.

To help guide us in planning for the future, we will also be developing a school Master Plan to continue our capital improvement strategy across the school which will support grant applications.

We will also be working toward and launching the school's own website which will really speak to whole school belonging and spotlight the great work of staff in supporting our students to achieve success as well as help us celebrate the success of students.

One of our strategic focuses is to grow our school community connections with families and careers. To do this, we will be developing a mobile app that links to our new student management system and enables families and the school to have two-way communication about school events and student attendance.

Finally, we are planning to upgrade our digital technology capacity so that we are better able to support learning for both students and staff.

It looks like another exciting and growth orientated year ahead in 2021, and it is our privilege to support students with high quality resources.

ALUMNI STORIES

Tim*

Tim* is currently 18 years old and living in Ballarat. He attended the Berry Street School's Ballarat campus in 2017. Tim is completing his third year of carpentry apprenticeship. He has one more year to go until he is fully qualified. Tim has also received a youth justice award. When he was 13, he spent nearly six months in custody. Now, Tim is on a successful pathway.

How is your apprenticeship going?

Tim: It is going great, it is very good. Honestly everything being outside and being out of the house and constantly keeping myself busy. It is good in a lot of ways. I will never stop that is for sure. I wouldn't mind staying with my boss who I am with now and collect all my tools and stuff then going out on my own. I got to do another course for my Certificate IV so I can become a registered builder.

What advice would you give students at Parkville or the Berry Street School?

Tim: Don't listen to what anyone else has to do say, just do yourself. Don't follow people, that is what catches young people, it isn't a great path to go down. I was glad I changed myself. I woke up myself when I was in Parkville. I don't want to be here anymore. I just didn't hang around those people anymore. You just gotta do what is best for you. If that means you have to leave old habits it is what it is.

Jack*

Jack is a student who used to attend the Berry Street School's Shepparton campus. Jack is completing his second year of the Vehicle Body Restoration Technician apprenticeship. He has two more years to go and said that he will finish it.

When asked about the Berry Street School, Jack said:

"You don't really see them as teachers, they are more there to guide you and help you to get your VCAL. You form a friendship with the teachers. Now after I have finished, I catch up with the teachers... The VCAL certificate shows that you are motivated enough to show up every day. Then, people that are giving you an apprenticeship see that you can do that and make something really good out of something. I never used to attend school. There was a time that I didn't attend school for about six years. I came to school every single day at the Berry Street School because it doesn't feel like a mainstream school. It is less crowded and more hands on."

* The students' names have been changed to protect privacy.



LITERACY AND NUMERACY GROWTH

We are pleased to share our 2020 academic data. The following represents the growth that the school averaged in both reading and maths for 2020. This data is for all students who were assessed in Term One 2020 and Term Four 2020. Despite major disruptions in education, two campuses made one or more year levels of average growth. Covid-19 slowed our growth down in 2020 due to attendance and re-engagement. As such, in 2021 we are implementing more interventions in both reading and maths so students continue to grow.

LITERACY

Noble Park 1.32 year growth

Ballarat 2.13 year growth

Shepparton 0.93 year growth

Morwell 0.88 year growth

MATHS

Noble Park 0.67 year growth

Ballarat 1.16 year growth

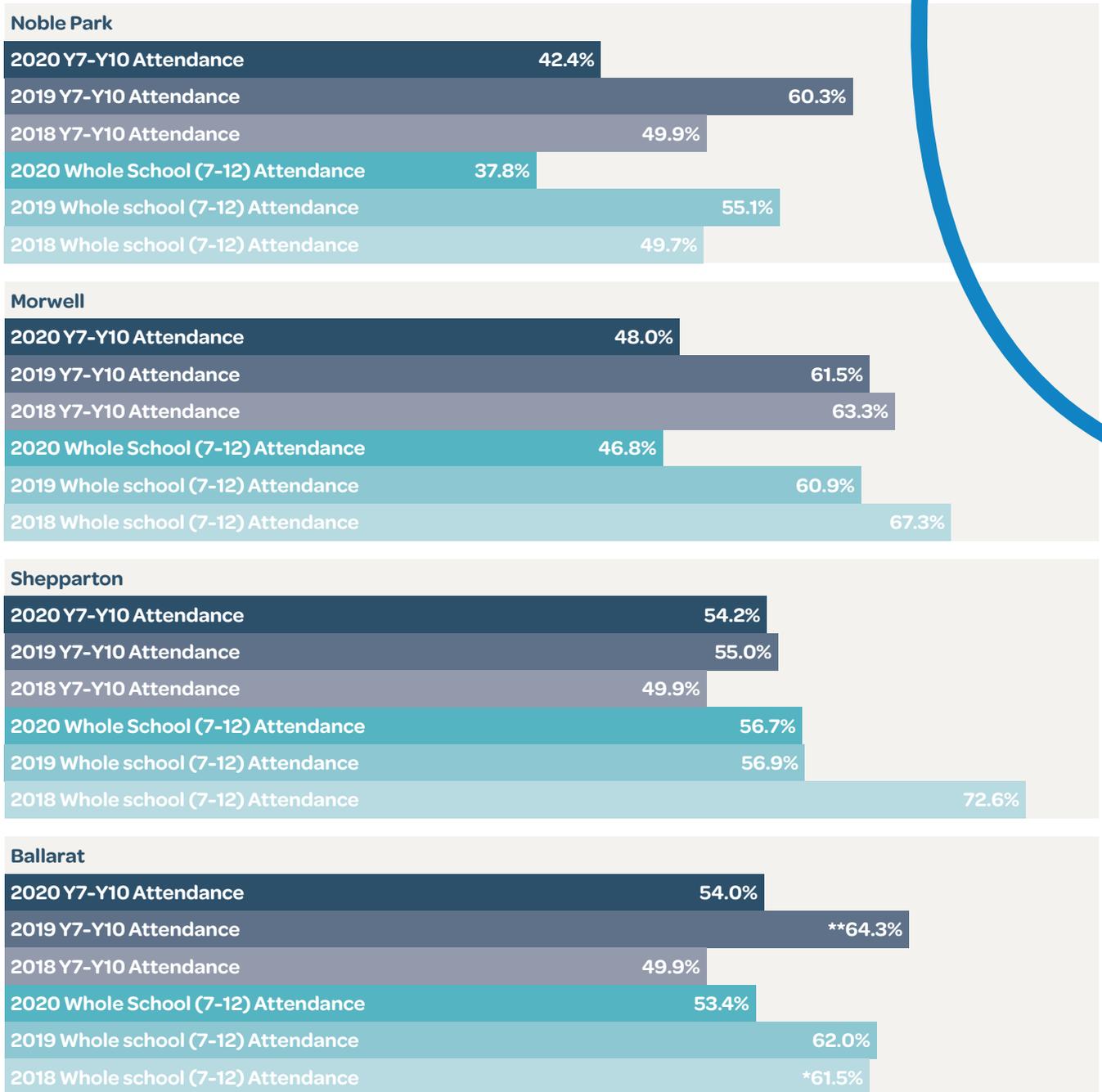
Shepparton 0.89 year growth

Morwell 0.70 year growth



ATTENDANCE DATA

The following chart shows the Berry Street School's attendance data for 2020. Our attendance averages dropped because of the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic. As such, we are putting in more supports in place in 2021 to support student engagement.



* In 2018 Ballarat only had Y7-10 students. Figures included in whole school attendance data.

**2019 was the first year Ballarat had Y11 students (no Y12 students in 2019)



This years annual report uses a portion of this stunning painting by the Berry Street School student, Ash Jukes.

In Ash's words...

"I started making art to help me connect to culture and country. I like making my artworks on an iPad, and I prefer to not use too much colour. I am inspired by my sister who is a tattoo artist and other creative members in my family."

The Berry Street School would like to end this annual report by respectfully acknowledging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the lands, skies, and waterways across Australia. We acknowledge that sovereignty was never ceded and we recognise the impact colonisation has had and continues to have. We appreciate the knowledge, wisdom and learnings of the longest living cultures and we are guided by their strength and resilience. The Berry Street School pays our respect and we acknowledge Elders as holders, protectors and educators of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.



