

Dandenong North Primary School

Dandenong North Primary School has a strong focus on literacy and numeracy; ensuring students develop strong foundation skills in these key learning areas. The school emphasises the importance of physical fitness and participation in sport as an important aspect of children's overall development. Our student community is highly multicultural with fifty-four languages other than English spoken as students' first languages. We are proud to be considered a school of best practice for English language learners with a three phase EAL program that is able to accelerate students' language acquisition. With such a diversity of cultures the school places great importance on the four values of care, courtesy, co-operation and common sense as a positive means of instilling tolerance and unity within our student community.

Our school provides extensive intervention programs in literacy and numeracy for students experiencing difficulty in progressing at a minimum rate of one year (0.5 VELs level) in one calendar year. Extension programs are also providing in writing and numeracy for students achieving six-months or more beyond the expected level in VELs. We make extensive use of a wider workforce, particularly through the use of a large number of skilled Education Support personnel. The ES staff work in conjunction with teachers to support students individually or in small groups to reinforce concepts or practice skills, thus ensuring children's individual learning needs are effectively addressed.

Staff professional development was a focus in 2012 with the school working towards further developing its strong culture of continuous improvement. Thirty-one staff completed coaching courses to ensure a program of teacher observation and feedback is underpinned by rigorous and professional conversations. This high quality program was recognised by AITSL (The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership) as an exemplary approach for raising teacher professional standards and now features on their website.

Our school moved into twelve new classrooms, containing four open learning areas and a new administration building early in term two, providing an outstanding environment for our highly effective teaching and learning practices. The school grounds have been extensively improved by School Council and provide the students with a safe and stimulating outdoor environment.

Student Learning	Student Engagement and Wellbeing	Student Pathways and Transitions
<p>The student performance data continues to be at a high level when compared with all Victorian government schools and reflects the high quality teaching and focus on a direct instruction model. The student data for literacy and numeracy places our students in the top 20% of all students for the 2012 school year and also over the past four years.</p> <p>Our whole school focus on continuous improvement in teaching practice is reflected in this long term achievement data. Numeracy continues to be a strength with students performing significantly higher than all other Victorian students. Additional intensive assistance provided for students assessed at six months below the expected level ('low C' grading) ensures rapid improvement and efficiency in addressing learning gaps for transient students or EAL learners. Numeracy Extension programs maximised the learning progress of high ability students and provides motivation for students to aim beyond their current level. The Reading Intervention Program addressed the literacy needs of 110 students every day and contributed to the significant learning improvements demonstrated when comparing the English Online data in March 2013.</p> <p>The effective use of Literacy Aides in all classrooms to support the teaching ensured all students received quality instruction, feedback and assistance in their literacy sessions.</p> <p>Thirteen students received funding through the Program for Students with Disabilities. All students worked towards regularly monitored and modified Individual Education Plan goals.</p>	<p>The Student Attitudes to School survey showed a score significantly above the state mean in all categories except for Student Relationships which was in the third quartile. The students' views on Classroom Behaviour varied from both teachers' and parents' who viewed classroom behaviour highly. To further analyse student perceptions in this aspect of school we undertook a more comprehensive survey by Certain Knowledge (Feedback on Teaching and Learning Questionnaire) to determine what aspects of student behaviour concerned children. Student Safety continued to be a focus due to the reduced play space caused by the building process. Two additional playgrounds were built to reduce crowding and substantial synthetic grassed areas were constructed. Recess access to Dandenong High's oval continued as did a split lunch timetable. The Peer Mediation, lunchtime groups and the PALs Programs ensured students had activities they could access and friends to play with to ensure a connectedness to others. Student engagement remained very high, particularly with regard to Student Motivation. This was rated in the fourth quartile by students, parents and teachers.</p> <p>The Self Esteem Program remained the foundation for creating a positive environment at the school and ensuring students feel connected to both staff and the school.</p>	<p>The main strategy for Student Pathways and Transitions continues to focus on our significant EAL cohort as they develop their English language skills. These students generally commence with little or no English and work from a modified EAL curriculum until they are able to work confidently and independently on the VELS curriculum. The program continues to operate in three main stages where instruction and assessment is carefully monitored to ensure accelerated progress. Effectively tracking student progress was a goal for this curriculum team throughout 2012 and they successfully developed an exemplary pro-forma that ensures student tracking each term. The Reception Program continued to operate in 2012, although in a modified and shortened form. Each of the three EAL stages were staffed by two teachers and an average of one hundred and thirty students attended these intensive programs. The school continued to receive and assist teachers from other schools to deliver high quality English language programs across the state.</p> <p>Our school worked closely with Lyndale Secondary College in developing a video conferencing program that would instruct EAL students in specific vocabulary prior to their science lessons at Lyndale. This was a highly successful strategy that enabled these students to successfully participate in lessons, focussing on concepts rather than just new terms or vocabulary. The prep transition program successfully catered for our largest intake of over 100 students. A positive relationship was developed with the new kindergarten director and regular visits occurred.</p>

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For more detailed information regarding our school please visit our website at

www.dandenongnorthps.vic.edu.au

or view our 2012 Annual Report online at <http://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/SReg>