

Peer Review Report – 2016 Cycle

Warrenheip Primary School

South Western Region

School number:	1591
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Peer Review Report Summary

Executive Summary

2. 1 School Context

Warrenheip is a small primary school situated five kilometers from the eastern approaches to the city of Ballarat, named after the settlement area of nearby Mt Warrenheip. The school has existed on its current site for over 100 years and has strong ties with its local community.

Enrolments have declined over 2013-16 to the current enrolment of 26. The local population demographics have transitioned from semi-rural to that of a satellite community to the greater city of Ballarat. This perception is reflected in the current enrolments which are drawn from not only the immediate community but from the greater local area, including the outer fringes of urban Ballarat.

Refurbishments over recent years have improved the quality of the buildings and grounds with the infrastructure consisting of five main buildings, including five classroom units, multi-purpose room, meeting room, staff room, office and two modern outdoor playgrounds developed on spacious grounds.

The current staffing profile includes 3 teachers — including a teaching principal plus a part-time business manager and has remained stable over the course of the strategic plan. This has been supported by the part time employment of teachers in specialist roles.

The school curriculum has been based on the Australian Curriculum (AusVELS) with classroom teachers responsible for the core program. The school has transitioned to the Victorian Curriculum for 2017. The school maintains a multi-aged approach to teaching the curriculum. Students move fluidly between nominated instructional groups in Literacy and Numeracy, to place them at an appropriate point of learning need. Teachers deliver weekly sessions for all year levels in Science and Technology, Physical Education, Art and Music which includes a ukulele program, while ICT is integrated across student learning with a 1:1 notebook to student ratio.

Warrenheip participates in Wathaurong cluster of schools and network activities that share professional learning and provide peer support. As a member of the cluster they also participate in sports events with children from eight other Ballarat schools. In addition the school, in co-operation with other local schools, provides a social experience for the children and ensures students access a wide range of activities.

Positive interactions and support from parents and the wider school community are an integral part in the school's ability to develop and maintain strong home/school partnerships. The School Council actively represents the interest of all stakeholders with a strong vision for the future for the school community

2.2 Summary of the School's Performance

2.2.1 Summary of the School's Performance against the Previous Strategic Plan

Student Learning

The goal for student achievement was to improve student learning outcomes in Literacy and Numeracy and was measured by students making at least one year's progress in AusVELS annually in Literacy and Numeracy. The panel agreed Warrenheip achieved their goal for student achievement. The key target to meet or exceed a year's growth each year for students P-6 was met or exceeded in Numeracy and Writing. The school had 90 -100% of students performing at or above expected levels according to teacher assessments in Literacy and Numeracy. NAPLAN data for all dimensions of Literacy and Numeracy were above state mean for Year 3 however declined in Year 5. As a result, relative growth data 2014-16 showed a greater percentage of students to be making medium growth in these dimensions. The panel was in agreement that that this should be a focus for improvement in the next Strategic Plan. The school successfully implemented strategies to build teacher capacity and supported students learning through the integration of ICT across learning and made effective use of flexible learning spaces. Building upon the successes the school will continue to focus on developing Individual Learning Plans, a school wide focus on improvement in Reading and developing teacher capacity in the use of multiple sources of data to inform learning growth.

Student Engagement and Wellbeing

The panel agreed Warrenheip achieved its goal for student Engagement and Wellbeing of strengthening students' sense of connectedness to school and peers and to successfully manage their personalised learning. The student data around all the elements were positive, particularly around student safety, in both the parent and student surveys. However, the target to reduce student absences below state mean was not achieved. This will continue to be a focus for the next Strategic Plan. A key strategy to have greater student involvement in their learning will also be a focus for the next planning period in addition to promoting student attendance and reducing student absences.

Student Pathways and Transitions

The panel was in agreement that the school achieved its goal of strengthening transitions and learning pathways for all students into, through and beyond the school. The school achieved the targets established with parent surveys for transition consistently reaching the 4th quartile over 2013-16 and teacher assessments demonstrated appropriate growth for intraschool transitions. Successful participation in cluster activities for students transitioning to Year 7 provided a solid foundation for transition to secondary school.

2.2.2 Summary of the considerations for the next Strategic Plan

As a result of the school's self-evaluation process and the panel's consideration of the school's performance over the past four years and the factors that enabled or inhibited its progress it was suggested that Warrenheip Primary School, in addition to maintaining existing successful programs and processes, consider the following key improvement areas for the next Strategic Plan:

Excellence in Teaching and Learning

Curriculum Planning and Assessment

The panel was in agreement with the terms of reference around excellence in teaching and learning that curriculum planning assessment in a school self-evaluation in terms of the FISO continuum is deemed to be evolving. They recommended the following goals and strategies:

Goal:

To improve student learning outcomes in Literacy and Numeracy to ensure high learning growth with a specific focus on Reading in years 3-6.

Evidence Based High Impact Teaching Strategies

As an outcome of discussions, the panel suggested the following for consideration by Warrenheip Primary School in deciding the next steps:

- To develop and implement an assessment schedule to ensure that it relevant and provides a balance around how teachers collect and use formative and summative data to inform student point of need.
- To develop a whole school approach to the collection and use of data, as informed by an assessment schedule, to improve student learning growth
- To have a whole school non- negotiable approach to an instructional model and teacher practice.
- To strengthen the culture of reflection and giving and receiving feedback, with staff participating in peer observations within and across the network
- To have greater student involvement in evaluating their own learning and effective use of student to teacher feedback.

A Positive Climate for Learning

The panel was in an agreement with the school's assessment for a Positive Climate for Learning in the FISO continuum was in the evolving stage. They recommended the school consider the following:

Goal:

To develop students as resilient, resourceful, reflective and reciprocal learners.

As an outcome of discussions, the panel suggested the following for consideration by Warrenheip Primary School in deciding the next steps:

Evidence Based High Impact Strategies

- To involve the students in their learning through their goal setting.
- To develop opportunities for parent involvement that enhances student learning.
- To have a whole school approach to developing effective relationships with all stakeholders.

2.2.3 Next steps

The review panel believes Warrenheip Primary School is well placed to implement the next stage of school improvement and will continue to provide a positive climate for student learning and engagement. Warrenheip will focus on whole school approaches to curriculum planning and assessment including; further development of an instructional model and assessment schedule, making effective use of data to establish learning growth while focusing on engaging students in their own learning to ensure improved outcomes for all students.