

School Review Report

2022 cycle

Laburnum Primary School

School number 4863

North Eastern Victoria Region

Validation Day: 17 August 2022

Fieldwork Day: 18 August 2022

Final Panel Day: 25 August 2022

Strategic Plan 2018–2022

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1. Public section

1.1 School Context	
Location and history	Laburnum Primary School (Laburnum PS) is located in the community of Blackburn, in the city of Whitehorse, approximately 22 kilometres from the Melbourne Central Business District. The school was established in 1964.
School facilities	The school grounds are approximately 2.8 hectares in area and include a synthetic grass oval, shaded playgrounds and basketball courts. Facilities include a multi-purpose hall, community centre, resource centre/library, a heritage listed building used as a performing arts centre, visual arts room, Out of School Hours Care (OSHC) Centre, Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) centre, and airconditioned classrooms with wireless technology.
Enrolments	Enrolments at the time of the review were approximately 723 students. Over the past four years, enrolments decreased by 35 students.
SFO and SFOE	The Student Family Occupation (SFO) category was 0.1350 and the Student Family Occupation Education (SFOE) index was 0.1493 in 2019–20.
Staff profile	The staffing profile of Laburnum PS includes a principal and two assistant principals, 42 teachers, nine full time equivalent Education Support (ES) staff, and four office administration staff. Specialist teachers take classes in Library, Visual Arts, Music, Languages (Spanish) and Physical Education (PE).
Curriculum	The school's curriculum framework incorporates the Victorian Curriculum from Foundation to Year 6 with an emphasis on Literacy, Numeracy and Inquiry learning.
Additional information	<p>Laburnum PS is part of the Victorian Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) initiative, provides an accredited OSHC Program, and optional instrumental music.</p> <p>The eLearning program is designed to equip students with digital technologies skills including the use of tablets, netbooks, and 3D printers.</p>

1.2 School and Community Highlights

Highlight 1

Title: Learning achievement in reading

**Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO)2.0 Core Element:
Teaching and Learning**

The Panel found that a key school community highlight at Laburnum PS was the learning achievement in reading:

- Students consistently achieved above State and Network outcomes in National Assessment Program—Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) testing for reading and higher percentages of students in the top bands of achievement than similar schools.
- In NAPLAN—Reading: Year 3, 2021, 88% of students were in the top two bands which was 22% above State results and 10% above similar schools.
- Another highlight was that 72% of Year 5 students were in the top two bands which was 22% above State results and 5% above similar schools in 2021.
- The Panel heard that the school engaged literacy experts and utilised the expertise of leaders and literacy learning specialists in the school, to develop a whole school instructional model for reading that was consistently implemented by all teachers.
- A whole school professional learning and systems focus led by the Principal team and specialist teachers ensured that students were introduced to different learning strategies to solve problems and achieve set goals.
- Improvement in teacher knowledge and utilisation of High Impact Teaching Strategies (HITS) including goal setting, explicit teaching, and the Gradual Release of Responsibility Reading instructional model were key enablers in learning growth.
- An explicit focus on making learning intentions and success criteria clear supported students' learning in Reading and ensured they were on task and understood what was being learned.
- Students told the Panel in focus groups that they enjoyed reading and appreciated the opportunities to choose texts they were interested in from a wide variety of resources in their classrooms, in the school library, and online.
- Implementing the PLCs model, where teachers in each Year level were involved in a three week Reading, Writing and Mathematics cycle, had built strong cohesion and consistency in teaching and learning practices.
- The use of pre-testing and assessment data analysis underpinned PLC planning and determined next steps for student learning.
- The school provided online resources during Learning from Home periods that ensured students continued learning effectively.

Highlight 2

Title: Growth in learning achievement in mathematics

**FISO2.0 Core Element:
Teaching and Learning**

The Panel found that a key school community highlight at Laburnum PS was the growth in learning achievement in numeracy/mathematics:

- The NAPLAN—Numeracy Benchmark growth: Years 3–5 data showed growth in the number of students meeting at or above benchmark growth in 2021 was 88% representing a 6.6% increase in the last three years. In the top two and middle two bands learning growth increased from 78% in 2018 to 88% in 2021, which was 11% above State data in these bands.
- The Panel also noted that 99% of students in Year 5 achieved results in the top two and middle two bands.
- As with the focus on reading, teachers had a culture of high expectations for student achievement in numeracy, so conducted regular assessment of student learning growth in mathematics, to enable point of need teaching that supported learning for individual students.

- Through a growth mindset approach to mathematics learning, and in alignment with the school values of being resilient and curious, students were encouraged to focus on their individual growth and to reflect on their own progress and think about their next steps in achieving their goals. Their engagement in mathematics increased as they explored different ways of solving problems.
- Year level PLCs set goals and collaboratively planned explicit and appropriate strategies for teaching and learning. Teachers explained how they engage in detailed planning to ensure they focused on the various elements of mathematics to support differentiated teaching and learning.
- Professional learning and school resources supported the development of numeracy teaching in the school, particularly in the more skilled use of assessment and data and in the use of HITS to improve practice. The Panel heard many examples of the ways that teachers had planned to improve mathematics strategies including identifying specific types of questions to support students in developing their skills in number and thinking, and reflecting on mathematics verbs so students could understand the language of mathematics.
- Specialist mathematics teachers worked with external professional consultants whose expertise was focused on developing rich tasks that ensured learner engagement and shared the development of consistent practices across the school. As a result of this staff commented in focus group discussions that their teaching practice had improved and students told the Panel that they enjoyed mathematics, especially the focus on authentic and real-life learning.

Highlight 3

Title: Positive staff climate

**FISO2.0 Core Element:
Teaching and Learning**

The Panel found that a key school community highlight at Laburnum PS was the positive staff climate:

- During the school review, the Panel found the leadership team and staff to be passionate, committed and focused on continuous school improvement, to ensure the learning achievement and wellbeing of all students and the whole school community.
- In the School Staff Survey (SSS) (2021), 96% of staff recorded a positive response to being engaged in Collective responsibility and 98% of teachers recorded a positive response to their sense of having a Collective focus on student learning.
- The Panel heard that during remote learning, the school leadership team had focused on supporting staff and student wellbeing. Staff appreciation for this was reflected in 93% positive responses to Instructional leadership in the SSS (2021).
- Teachers expressed confidence in the Year level PLCs structures and processes which ensured collaborative planning for learning and sharing of student data to address diverse learning needs.
- Staff appreciated the targeted professional learning support provided by the school leadership team and the opportunities for professional growth.

Highlight 4

Title: Positive classroom and school learning environment

**FISO2.0 Core Element:
Teaching and Learning**

The Panel found that a key school community highlight at Laburnum PS was the calm, settled and positive classroom environments:

- The Panel observed classes across the school and found that students were ready to learn, engaged in their learning and on task. Students responded well to teachers' instructions and were focused on a range of tasks that included individual and peer learning.
- In the students Attitudes to School Survey (AtoSS, 2021), 92% of students expressed a positive view on the item, 'My teacher expects me to do my best', and 94% agreed that 'My teacher expects students to pay attention', and 'My teacher expects me to listen'.
- Students were able to explain to the Panel what they were learning, why and how and were open and willing to discuss their learning with Panel members, when Panel members visited classrooms.
- Students were able to explain the school values and expectations for behaviour.

- The Panel saw that learning was differentiated to meet diverse learner needs and in their discussions with ES staff, they heard how ES worked collaboratively with classroom teachers and played a key role in working with individual students where required.
- Attitudes to attendance were very positive, with 85% of Year 4–6 students saying that 'I always try to attend school' and 93% saying 'I have friends at this school' (AtoSS, 2021).
- In student focus group discussions with the Panel during the review, students said they had missed being at school during remote learning and were glad to be back on campus, where they enjoyed being in class, engaging in the many clubs and activities and able to connect with their teachers and friends.

1.3 Summary of Key Review Findings

Performance against the School Strategic Plan (SSP) goals and targets

SSP Goal 1:

In the 2018–21 SSP, Laburnum PS set a goal to ‘improve individual learning outcomes for all students with a focus on literacy and numeracy’. The Panel found the school partially met this goal since there were three targets set, two were partially met and one was met.

SSP Goal 2:

The second goal set by Laburnum PS was to ‘create a positive climate for learning which empowers students and builds school pride’.

The Panel found that the school partially met this goal, with one target met and three targets partially met.

SSP Goal 3:

The third goal set by Laburnum PS was ‘to create a positive climate for learning which promotes student wellbeing’.

The Panel found the school partially met this goal, with three targets partially met.

Findings against the Terms of Reference (ToR) Focus Questions

ToR Focus Question 1:

To what extent have HITS including questioning, differentiated teaching, metacognitive strategies and purposeful feedback been implemented?

The Panel found that Laburnum PS had developed consistent approaches to implementing elements of HITS, particularly in literacy and numeracy teaching and learning related to setting goals, explicit teaching, worked examples, collaborative learning, and elements of differentiated teaching. However, the Panel found that the school had not yet fully implemented HITS strategies focused on questioning, metacognitive strategies and purposeful feedback. The Panel recommended that these elements, as well as the development of authentic, inquiry-based learning tasks, which are connected to the capabilities and other elements of the Victorian Curriculum, be further developed.

ToR Focus Question 2:

How can Laburnum PS activate student voice and agency across the school?

The Panel found that Laburnum PS had a number of strategies in place to activate student voice and agency including a Junior School Council, a peer mediation program and a young leaders’ program for all students in Years 5 and 6. The Panel also observed some examples of students taking responsibility and making some decisions about their learning. However, the Panel recommended that the school should further activate students’ voice and agency in their own learning and strengthen students’ participation and engagement in their classrooms and the development of school programs and school community activities.

ToR Focus Question 3

How can Laburnum PS renew and strengthen positive inclusion, health and wellbeing and partnerships with families/carers, staff and students in our diverse community?

The Panel found in school wellbeing data, that there had been a decline in elements of students’ physical, socio-emotional and psychological health and wellbeing that required further investigation. They recommended that there be a curriculum review to renew these elements of students’ learning in classrooms in the next SSP.

The Panel also found that during the periods of remote and flexible learning, parents/carers missed opportunities for face to face contact, and were not able to volunteer in the school, regular activities could not proceed, so student and community engagement had declined. Therefore, the Panel agreed that Laburnum PS should focus on a renewal of its communication strategies, whole school events and opportunities for community engagement. In addition, since the school had become increasingly diverse, with more than 25 language groups, there should be a renewed focus on the diverse nature of the Laburnum PS community and the wellbeing of all students’ through re-building programs and partnerships with families/carers, school leaders, teachers and students.

1.4 Summary of Key Directions for the next School Strategic Plan

The School Review Panel recommends the following key directions for the next SSP:

- HITS
 - metacognitive learning
 - questioning and feedback
- inquiry based learning
- student engagement in learning
- curriculum review
- student voice and agency
- student health and wellbeing
- students' school connectedness
- respect for diversity
- community engagement in learning
- parents and carers as partners.