

2015 Annual Report to the School Community

Specimen Hill Primary School

School Number: 1316



Name of School Principal:	Elizabeth Dianne Craig
Name of School Council President:	Hayley Davis 2/5/2016
Date of Endorsement:	Prince -

All Victorian government school teachers meet the registration requirements of the Victorian Institute of Teaching (www.vit.vic.edu.au).

This school meets prescribed minimum standards for registration as regulated by the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) in accordance with the Education and Training Reform Act 2006, inclusive of those schools granted an exemption by the VRQA under the 'Student enrolment numbers' and/or 'Curriculum framework for schools - languages program' minimum standards until 31 December 2015.



About Our School

School Context

Specimen Hill Primary School is situated in Golden Square a suburb of the rural city of Bendigo and is part of the North West Region. The school has a rich historical background dating back to 1874. The school was built on the goldfields, hence its name in reference to the gold specimens that were found in the area. In 2005/06 the original building was demolished to be replaced by a new school that was rebuilt on the original site. This enabled a learning environment more compatible to current teaching and learning methods and style. The school grounds are picturesque and the school community takes pride in maintaining the area. The school community draws from a low socio economic demographic and the school has an SFO of 0.67. The school has a population of 286 students with 23 teaching staff and 7 support staff members. A number of staff members work on a part-time basis. There are thirteen classrooms operating. These consist of -2X prep, 4X 1/2, 3X 3/4, 1X 4/5, 3X 5/6. Specialist areas consist of: Chinese (Gr 5/6) Indonesian (P-4), Art, Physical Education and a Circus Program. Two Reading Recovery teachers are employed to assist three students each at a time in the program. The school has a nominated School Improvement Officer (SIO) who provides Professional Development (PD) and coaching to staff in the areas of numeracy and literacy as well as the provision of a 'Space-Travellers' program targeting critical and creative thinkers across the school. The assistant principal role is dedicated to Wellbeing and this position is also supported by a Wellbeing Officer who works in the school for 3 days a week. Underpinning all school programs is the effective Speci Wellbeing program that operates in all classrooms across the school. An effective transition program operates to, through and beyond Specimen Hill and we have developed strong links with all of the secondary schools that our students transition to. Specimen Hill is part of the Crusoe transition cluster whose main aim is to strengthen the primary/secondary school relationship. Specimen Hill has a sister school relationship with Xing Hai Elementary school in Suzhou, China. This year the school is host to four Chinese students for an eight week cultural experience and three 5/6 students and two staff members from Specimen Hill travelled to China for a nine day cultural visit to Xing Hai China as part of the Bendigo Team China initiative. The school is very proud of the strong and effective home school partnership that it has nurtured over several years and also of the highly-skilled and cohesive staff who are dedicated to improving the education, wellbeing and future pathways for all of its students. This year the school has undertaken its Peer Review. During this process there was opportunity for reflection, celebration, community voice and ideas, feedback of programs and processes and an occasion for development, improvement and change. The school embraced this opportunity and found the process to be extremely positive as it continues to move forward and to develop the groundwork for the new Strategic Plan. Some highlights of the year were the selection of the school as one of four schools across Australia chosen to participate in a global research project on 'the effectiveness of school autonomy on improving student outcomes.' This also resulted in the principal travelling to Parliament House to present a summary of the school's journey and success and to be involved in a O&A session with an audience of over 120. A visit from Bruce Armstrong the acting Deputy Secretary of Education was another highlight in the year along with the school's continued NAPLAN success.

Achievement

In the 2015 Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) the focus areas in Student Learning were improving teacher capacity in the understanding and teaching of oral language and phonological awareness and embedding the Prep Oral Language program. Also there was a strong focus on personalized learning especially for those students on ILPs. In Student Engagement and Wellbeing the key focus areas were to decrease lateness to school, to improve classroom behavior and to improve student connectedness to peers. Strategies to achieve these included embedding the 5 school values, a common language around expectations and a concentration on 'hooks' to engage students in learning. In the area of Student Pathways and Transitions the AIP indicated a strong emphasis on improved information sharing and support for students transitioning from pre-school to prep and students from year 6 to year 7 especially the At Risk students. Work was also dedicated to developing a current information package to include parent protocols and the role of the parents in their child's learning. All of these focus areas were evident in staff performance and development plans (PDP). The emphasis on improving teacher capacity is evident in the Government School Performance summary (GSPS) data showing that in teacher assessments, Specimen Hill is achieving higher than its school comparison in English and similar in Maths. In the Grade 3 NAPLAN school comparison, Specimen Hill is achieving higher than its school comparison in all areas (including the 4 year average) in Reading and Numeracy. In the Grade 5 NAPLAN GSPS results, once again the Reading and Numeracy data is impressive indicating that Specimen Hill is achieving at a higher level than its school comparison. The school is extremely proud of these results as they are outstanding and it is testament to the excellent processes, diligence and dedication of staff, students and parents. In the Student Outcomes for NAPLAN on the GSPS learning gain from Grades 3-5, in reading 47% of students are categorized as high with 30% at a high level for numeracy. 28% are categorized high in Grammar and Punctuation and also in Spelling. These are extremely pleasing results. Writing is an area for continued focus with 26% of students categorized as operating at a low gain level and we would like to shift this in the future. Some of the strategies that the school has implemented to enhance teaching and learning and student outcomes determining these results are: more focused and measurable staff PDP goals which indicate explicit teaching strategies, explicit coaching by the SIO to deepen the understanding of student needs and to improve practice, improved induction including extensive coaching for new or returning staff members, a strong focus on oral language, data informed teaching, personalized student goal-setting, modified programs for At Risk students to optimise learning and engagement, strategic ESO support, strong leadership across the school including middle management and at the staff level especially in team planning, in curriculum teams, sub committees and the general high level of support and cohesiveness of the staff. High expectations for staff and student performance is critical combined with supportive parent participation. Parents show a robust belief that their children can and should be high achievers with positive and successful futures to follow. Underpinning all teaching and learning at Specimen Hill is the outstanding Speci Wellbeing program which focuses on developing resilience, empathy, self confidence, acceptance and excellence in all students. All of these strategies have been key contributors to student success. Professional



Development in the areas of staff leadership, a deeper understanding of and strategies for ASD students, differentiation, modified programs and teaching rigour as well as ongoing literacy and numeracy coaching have made a huge difference to extending staff capacity and success in student outcomes.

Engagement

In the 2015 GSPS data, Specimen Hill student attendance data is similar to the school comparison yet higher in the 4 year average. In the 2015 Specimen Hill AIP one of the key targets in Student Engagement and Wellbeing is to decrease the number of students arriving late to school by 70%. A number of students consistently arrive at school between 10.00 to 11.00am which although termed late it is actually recorded as non-attendance for the morning. The school has accurate data around attendance and lateness to school and has implemented a range of strategies to improve the situation. The school has implemented a School Management Tool and lateness and attendance is recorded. Alerts are highlighted when there is a regular occurrence of lateness or absenteeism for a particular student. Procedures are then effected which include: a phone-call home seeking the reasons why and a supportive plan activated to assist the child or family to get to school on time, and/or a letter home indicating the current attendance situation and a meeting called to discuss the reasons and a plan activated with strategies to improve the situation. Regular articles are included in the Newsletter to remind families of the attendance policy and procedures and of the impact of lateness and absenteeism on the child and his/her learning. In a pro-active manner, awards are given out at assembly at the end of each term to students who attend school for 97% of the term and extra special awards for 100% attendance. At the end of the year a 100% attendance award is given out to successful students and it is becoming a much coveted award. Teachers continuously refer to the importance of school attendance and being on time every day and awards are given at the class level to encourage this. By developing strong relationships and by knowing our school families, affirmative action is taken. A flier indicating the importance of attendance is regularly sent out to all families as another reminder. Fun Friday sessions with school attendance as a pre-requisite, morning breakfast programs, early morning running club, more interactive games before and during school-time, the Library open before school, the development of more engaging curriculum programs such as rotations including circus skills, music, science and ICT have all helped to engage students and to improve attendance. Although these strategies are having an impact, improvement at a faster rate is still desirable.

Wellbeing

In the Wellbeing section of the Victorian Government Schools Performance Data summary, in the school comparison Specimen Hill achieved lower in the area of connectedness to school from the Attitudes to School data. Yet in the 4 year average data, Specimen Hill has achieved similar to the comparison school. These results still require further improvement, although from the reflections by the staff and students it is felt that the results do not truly reflect the attitudes and tone of the Grade 5/6 students or other students across the school. In 2014, the school implemented a range of strategies to help to improve outcomes in this area but the indicators show little improvement over the 12 months. In 2015 further strategies have been realised which include: the school's selection to participate in the Victorian Schools Resilience project, an initiative of DEET. Other strategies are: the morning running club, further embedding of the 5 school values and placing a higher profile to this initiative through the Junior School Council and at weekly assemblies. The development of the junior and senior school choirs, instrumental program, circus skills and troupe, more multi-age science activity days, modified programs, further training for staff around the understanding of ASD and challenging behaviours, free fruit Thursdays, personalized programs and goal-setting, increased hours for the Wellbeing Officer, the Lifestyles program and feedback from parents and students from the 2015 Review surveys that were conducted as part of the school's Peer Review process.

Productivity

All processes at Specimen Hill operate in a very efficient, transparent and effective manner. The staffing consists of a mixture of experienced and relatively young staff members with at least twelve staff members working on a part time basis. Staff are expected to teach at all levels across the school when and if required. The Leadership team consists of the principal, assistant principal and the leading teacher. Middle management consists of team leaders and curriculum and sub committee leaders and all staff members are considered leaders in some field. A list of Roles and Responsibilities aligned with a score is issued at the start of the school year and staff choose from this list tallying up each task to a total commensurate to the level of teaching experience. This distributive model shares the load across the school and provides opportunities for staff choice and input. This has proven to be a fair and equitable process. The school functions with four school council sub committees- Student Learning, Management, Wellbeing and the Physical Environment committee. Staff nominate for leadership of these committees and all other staff members are aligned to participate on one committee each. Curriculum teams run parallel to these committees and these consist of ICT, Literacy and Numeracy, Science and Integrated Studies. Each staff member (full-time) receives 3 hours of APT per week with part time staff members receiving pro rata. One hour of APT is dedicated to team planning where the School Improvement Officer attends and leads the planning. PLTs and staff meetings are held on alternate weeks and the Consultative committee meets each month. Timetabling focuses on an uninterrupted 2 hour Literacy block with the juniors in the first 2 hours and the seniors in the second two hour block. The timetable is modified on a regular basis to accommodate changes to the program due to incursions, excursions, sporting days etc. This is found to be fair for all staff members. Each week each learning team operates rotation activities for one hour and these include: circus, music, Asian studies and cooperative games. There are two Reading Recovery teachers who each have three students working in the program at a time. This provides excellent intervention for students in grade one. The school privately employs a speech pathologist for one day per fortnight along with a school support officer for four days per fortnight to support speech therapy across the school



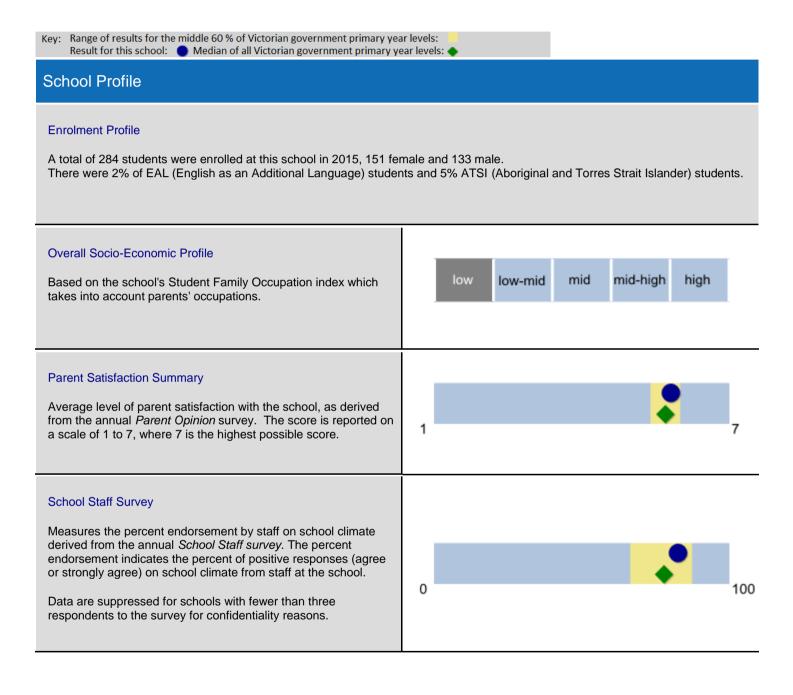
for up to 24 students. The school employs five SSOs to support individual students and student learning programs along with a fulltime business manager and a 0.6 assistant office manager. The term calendar is developed in advance and it is a working document for all staff members to follow. Consideration is given to maintaining a manageable level of special activities such as sports days and incursions throughout the term to minimize the interruption to the regular teaching and learning program. The staff is involved in regular Professional Development conducted at staff meetings and two dedicated Professional Development evenings per term. The school operates its own Out of School Hours Care program (OSHC) with before school starting at 6.30 to 8.40 (20 vacancies) and finishing at 6pm for after school care with thirty vacancies. Profits from this program are channeled back into the school budget. The canteen operates on two days a week and adheres to a green menu supporting healthy eating through the Healthy Canteens initiative. A paid SSO manages the canteen and volunteers (parents and grandparents) support its operation. The canteen operates on a profit margin of several thousand dollars each year which contributes to the school budget. The school operates its own uniform shop which is managed by the assistant business manager. This provides low cost uniforms and provides a profit for the school. All budgets are closely monitored and adhered to in an efficient manner. The principal, the school business manager and the management committee have overall responsibility for overseeing and maintaining budgets. Staff leave requests are finalized early in the year and for replacement the school draws on a team of excellent CRTs who are familiar to the school. Staff are encouraged and highly supported to seek promotion within or outside the school to follow a career pathway. The Principal spent term two in an acting principal role at another local school enabling a succession of leadership opportunities at Specimen Hill. The business manager was also seconded to the local school to provide mentoring for a new business manager in the school. The school encourages parent volunteers who must attend training and sign a Parent Protocols Agreement along with a current Working with Children's Check before working in the school. The parent community is highly supportive of the leadership and staff at Specimen Hill and have emotionally and physically invested in their child's education through a strengthened home/school partnership. An active Parents and Friends group operates in the school. Its role is fundraising, providing 'cook ups' of nutritious meals for families in need, providing support for the Grade six graduation and a host of other activities. The parents are also involved in the Parent Managed Head Lice program and a Speci Playgroup which operates for two hours one morning per week. There are up to twenty families that attend this group on a regular basis. Each year the school community readily hosts up to five Chinese students for an eight week period and up to four students from Specimen Hill accompanied by a staff member and the Principal travel to china for a nine day cultural experience. The schools budgets always operate in the black and Specimen Hill is considered to be a highly functional and successful school.

For more detailed information regarding our school please visit our website at http://www



The Government School Performance Summary provides an overview of how this school is contributing to the objectives of the Education State and how it compares to other Victorian government schools.

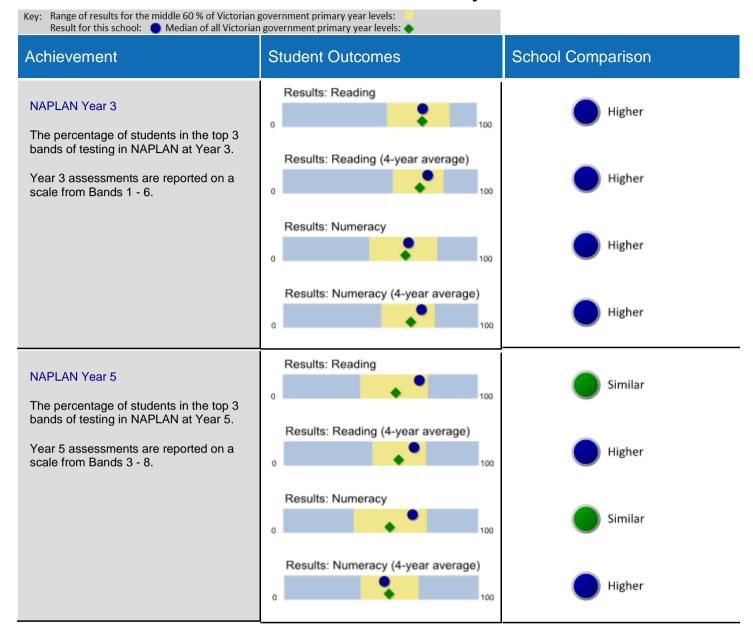
All schools work in partnership with their school community to improve outcomes for children and young people. Sharing this information with parents and the wider school community will help to deliver community engagement in student learning in the school, which is a state-wide priority of the Framework for Improving Student Outcomes.





Achievement	Student Outcomes	School Comparison
Teacher Assessments from the Australian Curriculum/Victorian Essential Learning Standards (AusVELS) Percentage of students in Years Prep to 6 with a grade of C or above in: • English • Mathematics The grades are the same as those used in your child's end of year report. A 'C' rating means that a student is at the standard expected at the time of reporting.	Results: English Results: Mathematics	Higher Higher
Towards Foundation Level AusVELS Learning gain of students, relative to expectation in a year, for all students working within Towards Foundation Level AusVELS (AusVELS A to D).	English No Data Available	Towards Foundation Level AusVELS is not used for the School Comparison.
Data will not be displayed where less than 10 student assessments were provided.	Mathematics No Data Available	







Achievement	Student Outcomes	School Comparison
NAPLAN Learning Gain Year 3 - Year 5 Learning gain of students from Year 3 to Year 5 in the following domains; Reading, Numeracy, Writing, Spelling and Grammar and Punctuation. NAPLAN learning gain is determined by comparing a student's current year result to the results of all 'similar' Victorian students (i.e. students in all sectors in the same year level who had the same score two years prior). If the current year result is in the top 25%, their gain level is categorised as 'High', middle 50%, is 'Medium' and bottom 25%, is 'Low'.	Reading 32 % 40 % 28 %	NAPLAN Learning Gain does not require a School Comparison.



Engagement	Student Outcomes	School Comparison
Average Number of Student Absence Days Average days absent per full time equivalent (FTE) student per year. Common reasons for non-attendance include illness and extended family holidays. Absence from school can impact on students' learning. A school comparison rating of 'lower' indicates that the absence rate in this school is greater than what we would estimate, given the background characteristics of their students. Average 2015 attendance rate by year level:	Results: 2015 Results: 2012 - 2015 (4-year average) Prep Yr1 Yr2 Yr3 Yr4 Yr5 Yr6 94 % 92 % 94 % 92 % 94 % 94 % 93 %	Higher Higher



Wellbeing	Student Outcomes	School Comparison
Students Attitudes to School - Connectedness to School Measures the Connectedness to School factor derived from the Attitudes to School survey completed annually by Victorian government school students in Years 5 to 12. The school's average score is reported here on a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 is the highest possible score.	Results: 2015 Results: 2012 - 2015 (4-year average)	Similar Similar
Students Attitudes to School - Student Perceptions of Safety Measures the Student Perceptions of Safety factor derived from the Attitudes to School survey completed annually by Victorian government school students in Years 5 to 12. The school's average score is reported here on a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 is the highest possible score.	Results: 2015 Results: 2012 - 2015 (4-year average)	Higher Similar



How to read the Performance Summary

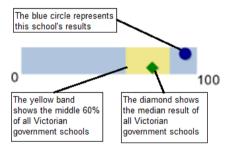
What are student outcomes?

Student outcomes show the achievements of students in this school in English and Mathematics. They also show results in national literacy and numeracy tests and, for secondary colleges, the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) examinations. They provide important information about student attendance and engagement at school.

For secondary colleges, the Performance Summary also provides information about how many students at this school go on to further studies or full-time work after leaving school.

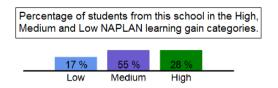
You can see these results for the latest year, as well as the average of the last four years (where available).

The Performance Summary also allows you to compare student outcomes for students at this school with the outcomes of students in all other Victorian government schools.

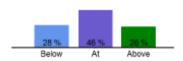


Additionally, NAPLAN learning gain charts are provided for each of the NAPLAN domains. These compare a student's current year NAPLAN result to the results of all 'similar' Victorian students (i.e. students in all sectors in the same year level who had the same NAPLAN score two years prior).

If the current year result is in the top 25% their gain level is categorised as 'High', the middle 50% is categorised as 'Medium' and the bottom 25% is categorised as 'Low'.



Results for students working within Towards Foundation Level AusVELS (AusVELS A-D) show the percentages of these students making progress below, at and above the expectations of their schools.

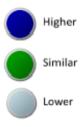


What is a School Comparison?

The *School comparison* is a way of comparing school performance that takes into account the different student intake characteristics of each school.

A School comparison takes into account the school's academic intake, the socio-economic background of students, the number of Aboriginal students, the number of non-English speaking and refugee students, the number of students with a disability, and the size and location of the school.

The School comparison measures show that most schools are doing well and are achieving results that are 'similar' to what we would estimate given the background characteristics of their students. Some schools are doing exceptionally well with the students they have, and have 'higher' performance. Some schools have 'lower' performance after taking into account their students' characteristics – these schools will receive targeted support to ensure that there is improvement.



Looking at both the student outcomes and school comparisons provides important information about what a school is doing well and the areas that require further improvement.

More information on school comparison performance measures can be found at: http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/manage ment/pages/performreports.aspx

What is the meaning of 'Data not available'?

For some schools, there are too few students to provide data. For other schools, there are no students at some levels, so school comparisons are not possible. Newly opened schools have only the latest year of data and no averages from previous years. The Department also recognises the unique circumstances of Specialist, Select Entry, English Language and Community Schools where school comparisons are not appropriate.

What is this school doing to improve?

All schools have a plan to improve outcomes for their students. The 'About Our School' statement provides a summary of this school's improvement plan.



Total Operating Revenue

Financial Performance and Position

\$2,730,058

Financial Performance - Operating Statement Summary for the year ending 31 December, 2015

Financial Position as at 31 December, 2015

Revenue	Actual
Student Resource Package	\$2,061,667
Government Provided DET Grants	\$406,359
Government Grants Commonwealth	\$66,764
Revenue Other	\$4,524
Locally Raised Funds	\$190,744

Funds Available	Actual
High Yield Investment Account	\$97,637
Official Account	\$17,155
Total Funds Available	\$114,791

Expenditure	
Experiorure	
Student Resource Package	\$2,047,873
Books & Publications	\$3,551
Communication Costs	\$2,506
Consumables	\$38,752
Miscellaneous Expense	\$138,098
Professional Development	\$10,446
Property and Equipment Services	\$128,819
Salaries & Allowances	\$161,965
Trading & Fundraising	\$62,960
Travel & Subsistence	\$3,964
Utilities	\$18,755

Financial Commitments	
Operating Reserve	\$93,288
Capital - Buildings/Grounds incl SMS<12 months	\$21,503
Total Financial Commitments	\$114,791

Othities	ψ10,733
Total Operating Expenditure	\$2,617,689
Net Operating Surplus/-Deficit	\$112,369
Asset Acquisitions	\$24,458

Student Resource Package Expenditure figures are as of 21 March 2016 and are subject to change during the reconciliation process.

Misc Expenses may include bank charges, health and personal development, administration charges, camp/excursion costs and taxation charges.

Salaries and Allowances refers to school-level payroll.

All funds received from the Department, or raised by the school, have been expended, or committed to subsequent years, to support the achievement of educational outcomes and other operational needs of the school, consistent with Department policies, School Council approvals and the intent/purposes for which funding was provided or raised.

Financial performance and position commentary

[Insert financial commentary here]