

# 2022 Annual Report to the School Community

School Name: Southern Autistic School (5253)



- All teachers at the school meet the registration requirements of the Victorian Institute of Teaching ([www.vit.vic.edu.au](http://www.vit.vic.edu.au)).
- The 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 (ETR) Act 2006. This includes schools granted an exemption by the VRQA until 31 December of the previous calendar year from the minimum standards for student enrolment numbers and/or curriculum framework for school language program.
- The school is compliant with the Child Safe Standards prescribed in Ministerial Order No. 870 – Child Safe Standards, Managing Risk of Child Abuse in School.

Attested on 28 April 2023 at 04:10 PM by Scott Tucker (Principal)

- This 2022 Annual Report to the School Community has been tabled and endorsed at a meeting of the school council and will be publicly shared with the school community

Attested on 28 April 2023 at 04:15 PM by Rochelle Pettit (School Council President)

## How to read the Annual Report

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### What does the 'About Our School' commentary section of this report refer to?

The 'About our school' commentary provides a brief background on the school and an overview of the school's performance over the previous calendar year.

The 'School Context' describes the school's vision, values, and purpose. Details include the school's geographic location, size and structure, social characteristics, enrolment characteristics, and special programs.

The 'Progress towards strategic goals, student outcomes, and student engagement' section allows schools to reflect on highlights related to implementation of and progress towards the School Strategic Plan and Annual Implementation Plan, and efforts to improve student learning, wellbeing, and engagement.

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### What does the 'Performance Summary' section of this report refer to?

The Performance Summary includes the following:

#### **School Profile**

- student enrolment information
- the school's 'Student Family Occupation and Education' category
- a summary of parent responses in the Parent Opinion Survey, shown against the statewide average for Specialist schools
- school staff responses in the area of School Climate in the School Staff Survey, shown against the statewide average for Specialist schools

#### **Learning**

- English and Mathematics for Teacher Judgements against the curriculum

#### **Engagement**

Student attendance and engagement at school, including:

- how many exiting students go on to further studies or full-time work

Results are displayed for the latest year and the average of the last four years (where available).

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### Considering COVID-19 when interpreting the Performance Summary

The Victorian community's experience of COVID-19 had a significant impact on normal school operations over the past three years. This impacted the conduct of assessments and surveys. Readers should be aware of this when interpreting the Performance Summary, particularly when interpreting trend data.

For example, in 2020 and 2021 school-based surveys ran under changed circumstances, and NAPLAN was not conducted in 2020. Further, absence and attendance data during this period may have been affected by the level of COVID-19 in the community and may be influenced by local processes and procedures adopted in response to remote and flexible learning.

Readers should keep this in mind when viewing and interpreting the data presented in the Annual Report.

## How to read the Annual Report (continued)

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### What does 'NDP' or 'NDA' mean?

'NDP' refers to no data being published for privacy reasons or where there are insufficient underlying data. For example, very low numbers of participants or characteristics that may lead to identification will result in an 'NDP' label.

'NDA' refers to no data being available. Some schools have no data for particular measures due to low enrolments. There may be no students enrolled in some year levels, so school comparisons are not possible.

Note that new schools only have the latest year of data and no comparative data from previous years. The department also recognises unique circumstances in Specialist, Select Entry, English Language, Community Schools and schools that changed school type recently, where school-to-school comparisons are not appropriate.

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### What is the 'Towards Foundation Level Victorian Curriculum'?

The Victorian Curriculum is assessed through teacher judgements of student achievement based on classroom learning.

The 'Towards Foundation Level Victorian Curriculum' is integrated directly into the curriculum and is referred to as 'Levels A to D'.

'Levels A to D' may be used for students with disabilities or students who may have additional learning needs

'Levels A to D' are not associated with any set age or year level that links chronological age to cognitive progress (i.e., there is no age expected standard of achievement for 'Levels A to D').

## About Our School

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### School context

Southern Autistic School (SAS) is a Victorian State Government specialist school located in Bentleigh East and services a vast catchment area from the South East Metropolitan Region. The population reflects a broad socio-economic range and cultural diversity, with nearly one fifth of our students having English as an additional language. SAS's vision is for our students to develop as lifelong learners who have a sense of belonging. Students are encouraged to implement their skills and knowledge to make choices and accept responsibility for their decisions. Our values are "I am Safe, I am a Learner and I Belong". These values are central to life of the School and how all members of the school community are expected to conduct themselves.

The School exclusively addresses the needs of students with Autism Spectrum Disorder and significant language needs. Students range in age from 3 to 18 years with student enrolment totalling 279 students, 44 female and 235 males. Our Early Education Program was attended by 24 three and four year olds. To enrol in the school aged program, students must meet the Program for Students with a Disability and ASD eligibility. The school aged program commences in the foundation years and extends through to Senior Secondary School, including the implementation of VCAL classes in 2020.

Individualised Learning Plans are developed and implemented to support the students in consultation and collaboration with parents. Parents are strongly encouraged to participate in termly student support group meetings and their input and goals for their child are valued. Teachers write learning outcomes for students based on Victorian Curriculum indicators.

Our 40 classes (including our EEP program) generally comprise of a teacher and an educational assistant with five to nine students. Additional educational staff may support classrooms where required to ensure participation and engagement in learning. Our staff comprise of highly committed teachers, educational support staff, four speech and four occupational therapists, ICT technicians, a school psychologist (0.4) and one social worker (0.6). The school is further supported by a leadership team of a Principal, two Assistant Principals, four Leading Teachers (that support each sub school) and three Learning Specialists. The school has 115 full time equivalent staff.

In 2022 the second stage of the building program commenced. SAS looks forward to improved facilities to further meet the needs of our school community.

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### Progress towards strategic goals, student outcomes and student engagement

#### Learning

Communication was a priority for learning in 2022.

Extensive training was given to staff to support them to model communication with students and to empower students to use Alternative and Augmentative Communication (AAC) to communicate their needs.

Staff members were trained to 'minimise vocals and maximise visuals' when communicating with students particularly those in a distressed state.

This training was also provided to Crown Coaches staff who are responsible for transporting our students to and from school each day.

The Tutor Learning Initiative (TLI) was used to support students in the primary school section transitioning to other educational settings. Students were supported with the Reading and Viewing curriculum domain, to ensure ability to access and engage with the curriculum in its entirety.

Teachers were supported by the occupational therapy team to continue implementing the Handwriting Without Tears program.

There was a particular focus in training with use of the hands on manipulatives for students at pre Vic Curric levels A to D, to support fine motor skills and good posture required for Foundation level writing activities.

In the senior school students completed their SPEC ( South Pacific education program) certificates which they worked on as a part of their Vic curriculum programs in their classes.

Six students successfully completed their foundation VCAL certificate and another five completed some VCAL units which will provide them with credits towards their VPC which they will complete in 2023.

A cohort of senior students completed their Job Well Done certificate in preparation for work experience and 6 year 11 students successfully completed Barista courses.

All senior school students began the transition. From the Duke of Ed Bridge course to the Bronze award with all year 9-12 students now enrolled in the Bronze certificate.

## Wellbeing

Training was provided to staff to identify students who required support with their mental health.

The premise was that if these students could be identified early programs could be implemented to address this issue.

Adam Voight a well-known educational spokesperson who makes regular appearances of the television program 'The Project' presented to staff.

Adam does have a background of working in specialist schools.

His address focussed on the mental health challenges students faced post pandemic.

He outlined steps educators could use to identify mental health problems and strategies to address these issues.

Our school Therapy dog remained a favourite to students. Trauma informed interventions were implemented using Sammi.

Sammi was also used in a dog desensitisation program. The purpose of this program was to support a number of students to overcome their fears and sensory issues associated with pets.

The redevelopment of the senior basketball court was a big hit with the students and is widely used by many students.

## Engagement

A focus of our third Curriculum Day was the Learn to Play program delivered by an external presenter Eleanor Francis.

Staff members were trained to model effective strategies to support students to learn to play.

Many students with autism are challenged to develop play skills, this can significantly impact their communication and interpersonal skills as they grow up.

Learn to Play is about teaching these skills rather than waiting for them to happen.

HANEN training was again provided to all staff.

Hanen More Than Words® is a research-based, child-led approach that supports connection, engagement, and social communication development.

The premise of this training is to provide staff with skills to teach communication and early social engagement skills to students with Autism.

A Student Representative Council (SRC) was established for the first time in 2022.

The school ran a junior SRC and a senior SRC. As part of their role they organised several fundraisers some more successful than others.

We also had two student representatives on school council.

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## Other highlights from the school year

Certainly, one of the great highlights of 2022 was the freedom to be able to once more conduct and host whole school events.

In November after a two-year hiatus, we hosted our family fun day.

This was a great celebration of the year past and included attractions such as carnival rides, jumping castles, a train ride and disco. We were fortunate to have the Rotary club organise a sausage sizzle for the school community.

School camps also returned in 2022. Our seniors continued their affiliation with the Blackwood Special Schools Outdoor Education Centre.

The focus of learning at Blackwood centred around developing skills of communication, resilience and teamwork in an engaging outdoor environment.

In order to prepare students for camping experiences our upper school students participated in an overnight school sleepover. The perfect introduction to staying away from home.

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## Financial performance

Southern Autistic School's 2022 net operating surplus was \$421,264. This is primarily due to the difference between SRP revenue and expenditure. SRP salaries increased by 4% in 2022 in order to support a growing student population. After SRP salaries, the greatest expenditure is Support Services (employment of casual agency staff and contractors). This was due in part to increased absences on the back of the pandemic and a statewide shortage of education staff.

Locally raised funds from fundraising opportunities are still considerably lower than what they were before the pandemic.

Our financial position is strategically linked to our Annual Implementation Plan and our four-year Strategic Plan. Construction of a new two storey building, stage two of our master plan, managed by the Victorian School Building Authority, commenced in 2022. Features of this project include two early education classrooms, a whole school library, a large kitchen and canteen area, a family meeting room and new administration facilities. The new building designed by the same architect who designed stage one of the project will follow the same external look.

# Performance Summary

The Performance Summary for government schools 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 helps to support community engagement in student learning, a key priority of the Framework for Improving Student Outcomes 2.0 (FISO 2.0).

Refer to the 'How to read the Annual Report' section for help on how to interpret this report.

## SCHOOL PROFILE

### Enrolment Profile

A total of 279 students were enrolled at this school in 2022, 44 female and 235 male.

24 percent of students had English as an additional language and NDP percent were Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

### Overall Socio-Economic Profile

The overall school's socio-economic profile is based on the school's Student Family Occupation and Education index (SFOE).

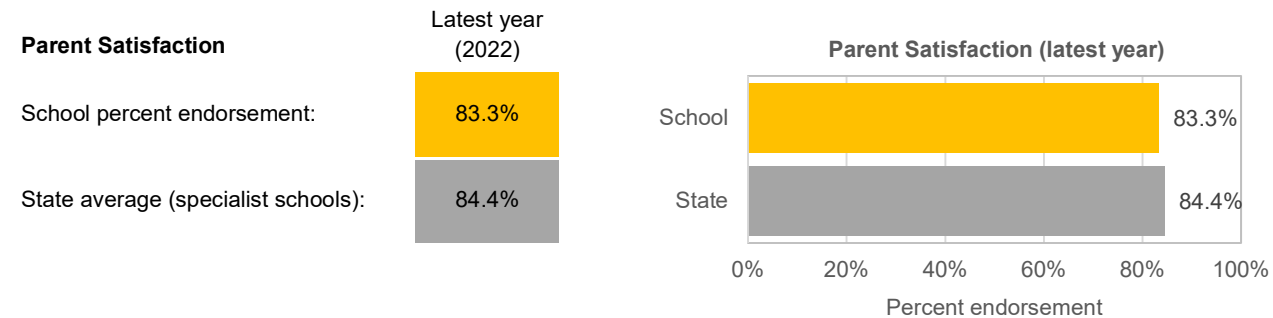
SFOE is a measure of socio-educational disadvantage of a school, based on educational and employment characteristics of the parents/carers of students enrolled at the school. Possible SFOE band values are: Low, Low-Medium, Medium and High. A 'Low' band represents a low level of socio-educational disadvantage, a 'High' band represents a high level of socio-educational disadvantage.

This school's SFOE band value is: Low - Medium

### Parent Satisfaction Summary

The percent endorsement by parents on their school satisfaction level, as reported in the annual Parent Opinion Survey.

Percent endorsement indicates the percent of positive responses (agree or strongly agree) from parents who responded to the survey.

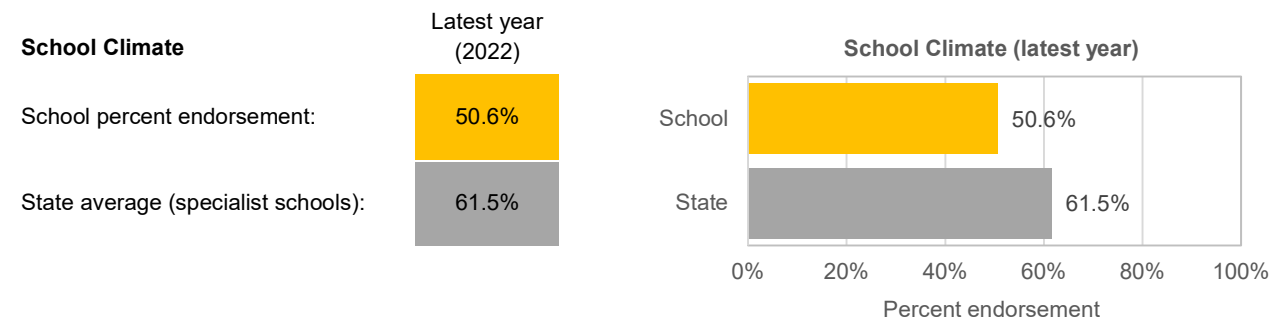


### School Staff Survey

The percent endorsement by staff on School Climate, as reported in the annual School Staff Survey.

Percent endorsement indicates the percent of positive responses (agree or strongly agree) from staff who responded to the survey.

Data is suppressed for schools with three or less respondents to the survey for confidentiality reasons.



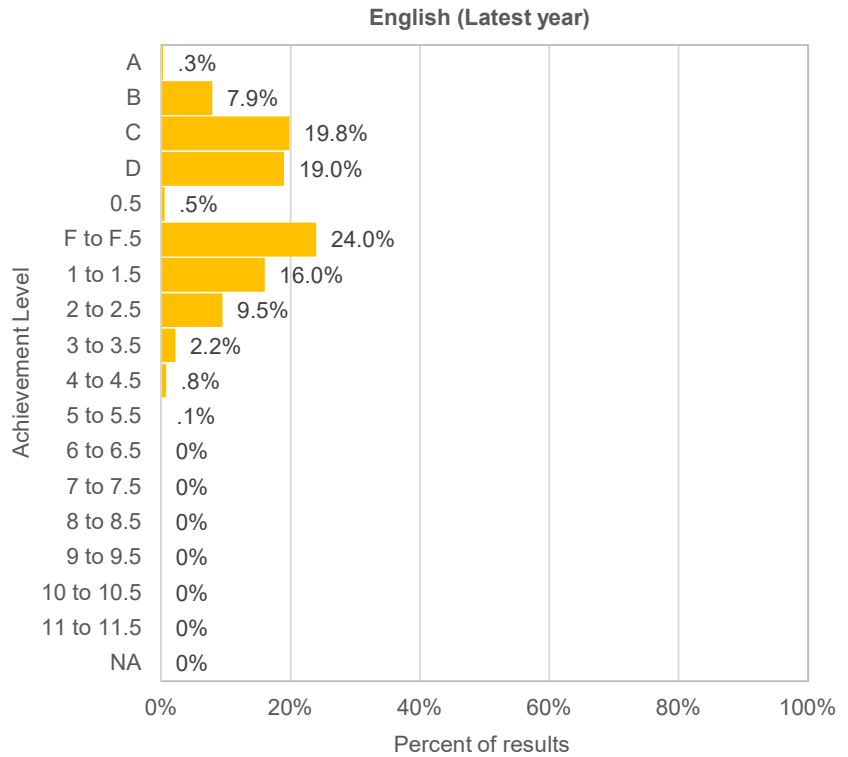
## LEARNING

### Teacher Judgement of student achievement

Percent of results at each achievement level in English and Mathematics.

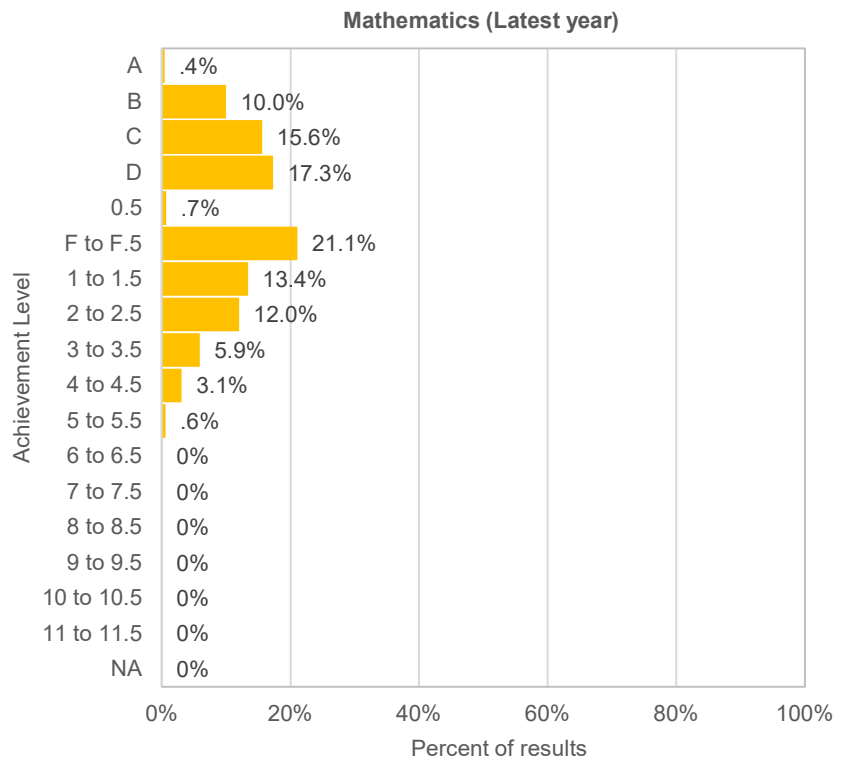
#### English

Achievement Level	Latest year (2022)
A	0.3%
B	7.9%
C	19.8%
D	19.0%
0.5	0.5%
F to F.5	24.0%
1 to 1.5	16.0%
2 to 2.5	9.5%
3 to 3.5	2.2%
4 to 4.5	0.8%
5 to 5.5	0.1%
6 to 6.5	NDA
7 to 7.5	NDA
8 to 8.5	NDA
9 to 9.5	NDA
10 to 10.5	NDA
11 to 11.5	NDA
NA	NDA



#### Mathematics

Achievement Level	Latest year (2022)
A	0.4%
B	10.0%
C	15.6%
D	17.3%
0.5	0.7%
F to F.5	21.1%
1 to 1.5	13.4%
2 to 2.5	12.0%
3 to 3.5	5.9%
4 to 4.5	3.1%
5 to 5.5	0.6%
6 to 6.5	NDA
7 to 7.5	NDA
8 to 8.5	NDA
9 to 9.5	NDA
10 to 10.5	NDA
11 to 11.5	NDA
NA	NDA





## ENGAGEMENT

### Average Number of Student Absence Days

Absence from school can impact on students' learning. Common reasons for non-attendance include illness and extended family holidays.

Student Absence	2019	2020	2021	2022	4-year average
School average number of absence days:	23.7	25.4	25.1	38.9	28.3

### Students exiting to further studies or full-time employment

Percentage of students going on to further studies or full-time employment.

Note: This measure refers to data from the previous calendar year. Data excludes destinations recorded as 'Unknown'.

Student Exits	2018	2019	2020	2021	4-year average
School percent of students with positive destinations:	96.3%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	98.7%

# Financial Performance and Position

## FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE - OPERATING STATEMENT SUMMARY FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 DECEMBER, 2022

Revenue	Actual
Student Resource Package	\$11,510,318
Government Provided DET Grants	\$2,729,914
Government Grants Commonwealth	\$7,711
Government Grants State	\$0
Revenue Other	\$31,125
Locally Raised Funds	\$72,178
Capital Grants	\$0
<b>Total Operating Revenue</b>	<b>\$14,351,247</b>

Equity <sup>1</sup>	Actual
Equity (Social Disadvantage)	\$51,269
Equity (Catch Up)	\$0
Transition Funding	\$0
Equity (Social Disadvantage – Extraordinary Growth)	\$0
<b>Equity Total</b>	<b>\$51,269</b>

Expenditure	Actual
Student Resource Package <sup>2</sup>	\$11,088,673
Adjustments	\$0
Books & Publications	\$0
Camps/Excursions/Activities	\$59,827
Communication Costs	\$5,582
Consumables	\$167,226
Miscellaneous Expense <sup>3</sup>	\$238,345
Professional Development	\$62,385
Equipment/Maintenance/Hire	\$79,204
Property Services	\$214,213
Salaries & Allowances <sup>4</sup>	\$25
Support Services	\$1,944,728
Trading & Fundraising	\$32,339
Motor Vehicle Expenses	\$14,258
Travel & Subsistence	\$851
Utilities	\$86,929
<b>Total Operating Expenditure</b>	<b>\$13,994,586</b>
<b>Net Operating Surplus/-Deficit</b>	<b>\$356,662</b>
<b>Asset Acquisitions</b>	<b>\$51,358</b>

- (1) The equity funding reported above is a subset of the overall revenue reported by the school.
- (2) Student Resource Package Expenditure figures are as of 24 Feb 2023 and are subject to change during the reconciliation process.
- (3) Miscellaneous Expenses include bank charges, administration expenses, insurance and taxation charges.
- (4) Salaries and Allowances refers to school-level payroll.

## FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2022

<b>Funds available</b>	<b>Actual</b>
High Yield Investment Account	\$1,214,471
Official Account	\$46,483
Other Accounts	\$0
<b>Total Funds Available</b>	<b>\$1,260,954</b>

<b>Financial Commitments</b>	<b>Actual</b>
Operating Reserve	\$463,416
Other Recurrent Expenditure	\$14,838
Provision Accounts	\$0
Funds Received in Advance	\$25,832
School Based Programs	\$227,277
Beneficiary/Memorial Accounts	\$0
Cooperative Bank Account	\$0
Funds for Committees/Shared Arrangements	\$6,805
Repayable to the Department	\$0
Asset/Equipment Replacement < 12 months	\$198,803
Capital - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months	\$100,000
Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months	\$52,364
Asset/Equipment Replacement > 12 months	\$54,000
Capital - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months	\$40,000
Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months	\$74,000
<b>Total Financial Commitments</b>	<b>\$1,257,336</b>

*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.*