

# 2025 Annual Report to the School Community

School Name: Heatherwood School (4871)



- all teachers at the school meet the registration requirements of the [Victorian Institute of Teaching \(VIT\)](#)
- the school meets prescribed Minimum Standards for registration as regulated by the Victorian Regulation and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) in accordance with the [Education and Training Reform Act 2006 \(Vic\)](#) (this includes any exemption granted to this school by the VRQA, for the most recent calendar year, in relation to minimum student enrolment numbers and/or the curriculum framework requirement to deliver a languages program)
- the school meets the requirements of the Child Safe Standards as prescribed in [Ministerial Order 1359 – Implementing the Child Safe Standards – Managing the risk of child abuse in schools \(PDF\)](#).

Attested on 03 April 2026 at 10:40 AM by Karlie Gooding (Principal)

- As executive officer of the school council, I attest that this 2025 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 03 April 2026 at 10:41 AM by Karlie Gooding (Principal)

## How to read the Annual Report

### 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.

### 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
  - responses to the General Satisfaction area of the Parent/Caregiver/Guardian Opinion Survey
  - school staff responses to the School Climate area of the School Staff Survey
- Learning
  - English for Teacher Judgements against the curriculum
  - Mathematics for Teacher Judgements against the curriculum
- Engagement
  - how many exiting students go on to further studies or full-time work
  - average absence days per student
  - student attendance rate

Key terms used in the Performance Summary are defined below:

#### NDP and NDA

'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.

## 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

### School context

Heatherwood is a government secondary school located in the eastern Melbourne suburb of Donvale. It is a special school that provides education for students with mild intellectual disabilities. The school is committed to fostering student engagement in learning while supporting the development of each student's personal, social and academic capabilities. Heatherwood aims to improve outcomes for all students by developing the knowledge, skills and confidence required for them to participate successfully in community life and post-school pathways.

Heatherwood School employs 62 equivalent full-time staff, including 4 Principal Class members, 4 Leading Teachers, 5 Learning Specialists, 42 teachers and 30 Education Support staff. All teachers are fully qualified and meet the registration requirements of the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT). At the beginning of 2025, the school had an enrolment of 217 students, comprising 87 female and 130 male students. Thirteen percent of students speak English as an additional language, and four percent identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

Students are taught using the Victorian Curriculum and the Victorian Pathways Certificate (VPC) for Years 11 and 12. Each student's educational pathway is individually tailored through Individual Education Plans (IEPs) to meet their specific learning needs. Students benefit from extensive resourcing, small class sizes of 10–14 students, and the support of Education Support staff across a range of learning areas. Heatherwood is also a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) and offers a range of vocational training certificate courses. These include Certificates in Hospitality (Kitchen Operations), Retail, Active Volunteering, Sport and Recreation, Agrifoods, and Employment Pathways. Transition and community support programs are provided to assist students and their families as they move from school into post-school pathways and employment. Additional programs that support students' personal and social development include ADVANCE, Future Ready and Protective Behaviours.

Heatherwood recognises the importance of strong partnerships with its community and greatly values the involvement and contributions of parents and carers. Collaborative relationships between families, staff and community partners play an important role in supporting positive outcomes for all students.

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

#### Learning

Heatherwood believes that every student can learn and has the right to do so. To support this, each student has an individual learning program designed around their strengths, needs, and goals. Teachers use clear, explicit teaching and thoughtful planning to help students at their point

of need. Every student has an Individual Education Plan (IEP) that includes long-term learning and personal goals, as well as short, achievable five-week goals. Students are encouraged, supported, and challenged to work towards these goals at a pace that suits them.

Teachers use a variety of assessments to understand how students are progressing and to inform their planning. Regular planning meetings help staff review and improve teaching programs throughout the year. Our learning is based on the F–10 Curriculum Version 2.0 and the Victorian Pathways Certificate (VPC). Students also take part in a range of VET Certificate I and II courses in Years 10, 11 and 12 through the Heatherwood School Registered Training Organisation (RTO).

Heatherwood offers many specialist and community-based programs that help students develop confidence, independence, and real-world skills. These include Digital Technology, Physical Education, Food Technology, STEM, Active Life/Outdoor Education, Horticulture, Protective Behaviours and Visual Art. We also provide the Future Ready program for Year 9 students, Work Experience for Years 10–12, and an onsite Independent Living Skills Program for Years 10–12. Through these programs, students learn important transferrable skills they can use at home, at work, and in the community.

Teaching life skills is a key part of our Learning for Life approach. Students learn to build confidence in the community and practise using the skills they learn at school in everyday situations. This includes planning their day, managing personal responsibilities, and learning how to care for themselves, their living space, and their environment. These skills are taught across the curriculum and strengthened through hands-on activities, community experiences, and explicit instruction.

Digital technologies also play an important role in learning and developing Digital Literacy at Heatherwood School. Students in Years 7–12 use individual laptops, and we make sure our technology reflects what is being used in the wider community. Digital tools help build essential skills and make learning more engaging. We also teach students how to use technology safely and responsibly, recognising how important it is in everyday life.

## Wellbeing

Heatherwood is strongly committed to the development and wellbeing of “every student, every day”. All students have access to wellbeing support on a daily basis, as required. Heatherwood School provides challenging programs to develop, reinforce and extend students academically, socially and personally. Building self-confidence, resilience, and the ability to interact safely and successfully are the focus, particularly on transition programs.

The school has a strong Student Representative Council which seeks out student views and advocates on their behalf with regular meetings and feedback at section assemblies. Students take significant roles and responsibilities for a range of activities including fundraising for identified support agencies or charities. SRC members meet with the principal termly to present ideas and provide feedback about issues within the school.

Heatherwood has a full-time Assistant Principal who has the responsibility of student wellbeing, including working with families, external agencies, allied health supports and internal staff to address wellbeing needs of every student. If necessary, the school will financially support any student to access a school uniform and to participate in camps. The school employs a Social

Worker to provide wellbeing support and link families with appropriate support agencies (where possible within their local community). The role also is to assist families to navigate the NDIS, including support with applying for access and understanding a student's plan, as well as assisting with applying for Centrelink support.

A Behaviour Analyst is employed 3 days a week to assist staff with developing behaviour support strategies for students that are disengaged or displaying behaviours of concern.

Heatherwood also has a Wellbeing team focussing on the wellbeing and welfare needs of students. The team consists of a range of staff that represent different areas of the school. The team meets weekly to discuss specific student concerns.

A number of lunchtime clubs have been established to provide additional options for students during break times to socialize and engage in activities of interest.

Heatherwood has integrated the School Wide Positive Behaviour Support program to teach and promote positive behaviours in all settings across the school. This has had a significant impact on the incidence of negative behaviour.

## Engagement

Heatherwood School is committed to providing a broad range of learning opportunities that develop the skills, attitudes and behaviours students need to maximise current and future opportunities and actively participate in their communities.

The school maintains strong links with external agencies, community organisations and local businesses to provide authentic, real-world learning experiences. Programs such as the Year 10 Applied Learning Program, Work Experience, Structured Workplace Learning, and Future Ready enable students to apply their learning, build independence, and develop transferable employability skills.

Engagement is strengthened through programs that build student confidence, self-esteem and resilience. Practical and applied learning experiences are designed to maximise student involvement and provide opportunities to develop skills that can be used at home, in the workplace, and in community settings. Individual programs are tailored to student interests, strengths and goals, supporting motivation, commitment and personal growth.

Heatherwood prioritises real-life learning contexts so that students can understand the relevance and purpose of their education. Community-based learning and pathway-focused programs prepare students for successful transitions beyond school. Senior students participate in VET programs within the Victorian Pathways Certificate, providing industry-aligned, hands-on learning that complements Applied Learning and Future Ready programs and strengthens post-school employability and independence.

The school recognises that students learn in different ways and implements a range of strategies to support engagement, including individual learning plans, flexible timetables, and personalised adjustments. Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and five-week learning goals are central to engagement. Students are involved in goal development to support ownership of their learning. Learning intentions are clearly communicated to ensure students understand expectations and can monitor their progress.

We address the area of student non-attendance through a holistic approach and utilise Individual Education Plans to set achievable attendance goals, reviewed at regular intervals. Student absences data saw improvements from the previous year with the average number of days of unexplained absences falling from 8.7 (2024) to 6.9 (2025).

Through consistent, individualised, and community-connected practice, Heatherwood ensures every student is actively engaged in learning, develops practical skills and knowledge, and is supported to achieve growth and successful post-school transitions.

## Financial performance

Heatherwood School continued its strong financial performance in 2025. We invested our funds in a range of programs and resources that allowed our students to achieve their best across all aspects of our school.

Our extensive workforce planning efforts ensured a staffing structure that assisted students not only directly in the classroom but also with other supports in wellbeing. Our equity funding, grants and fundraising efforts have been acquitted in line with their respective requirements and we appreciate the opportunities they have afforded our school. Heatherwood School remains committed to supporting families experiencing financial hardship and will continue to ensure that financial circumstances do not limit students' access to educational programs and opportunities.

Several factors need to be considered when reviewing the school's financial data. The financial figures include funds allocated to the Statewide Vision Resource Centre (SVRC), as Heatherwood School acts as the banker school for this program. We have been pleased to see the continued progress of the capital building works during 2025 with a proposed completion date late 2026. The school's operating surplus continues to be strategically held in reserve to support future stages of the school's masterplan.

## 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 215 students were enrolled at this school in 2025, 81 female and 134 male. 9% had English as an additional language and 4% 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 **Medium**.




### Parent Satisfaction Summary

The percentage endorsement by parents on their General School Satisfaction, as reported in the annual Parent/Caregiver/Guardian Opinion Survey. Percent endorsement indicates the percent of positive responses (agree or strongly agree) from parents who responded to the survey.

|   |                 | 2025   |   |
|---|-----------------|--------|---|
| % positive endorsement General School Satisfaction (Parent/Caregiver/Guardian Opinion Survey) | School          | 100.0% |  |
|   | Similar schools | 89.2%  |  |
|   | State           | 86.9%  |  |

### School Staff Survey

The percentage endorsement by staff on School Climate, as reported in the annual School Staff Survey. Percentage endorsement indicates the percent of positive responses (agree or strongly agree) from staff who responded to the survey.

|   |                 | 2025  |   |
|---|-----------------|-------|---|
| % positive endorsement School Climate (School Staff Survey) | School          | 47.4% |  |
|   | Similar schools | 72.8% |  |
|   | State           | 68.0% |  |

# LEARNING

## Teacher Judgement of student achievement English




Percent of results at each achievement level in English

|           |        |  | 2025  |
|-----------|--------|--|-------|
| A         | School |  | 0.0%  |
| B         | School |  | 0.0%  |
| C         | School |  | 1.1%  |
| D         | School |  | 1.4%  |
| 0.5       | School |  | 2.3%  |
| F-F.5     | School |  | 16.8% |
| 1.0-1.5   | School |  | 26.9% |
| 2.0-2.5   | School |  | 31.7% |
| 3.0-3.5   | School |  | 15.4% |
| 4.0-4.5   | School |  | 3.9%  |
| 5.0-5.5   | School |  | 0.5%  |
| 6.0-6.5   | School |  | 0.0%  |
| 7.0-7.5   | School |  | 0.0%  |
| 8.0-8.5   | School |  | 0.0%  |
| 9.0-9.5   | School |  | 0.0%  |
| 10.0-10.5 | School |  | 0.0%  |
| 11.0-11.5 | School |  | 0.0%  |
| N/A       | School |  | 0.0%  |

## Teacher Judgement of student achievement Mathematics

Percent of results at each achievement level in Mathematics

|       |        |  | 2025  |
|-------|--------|--|-------|
| A     | School |  | 0.0%  |
| B     | School |  | 0.0%  |
| C     | School |  | 0.0%  |
| D     | School |  | 0.0%  |
| 0.5   | School |  | 6.3%  |
| F-F.5 | School |  | 22.4% |

|                  |               |              | 2025  |
|------------------|---------------|--------------|---|
| <b>1.0-1.5</b>   | <b>School</b> | <b>33.6%</b> |  |
| <b>2.0-2.5</b>   | <b>School</b> | <b>25.9%</b> |  |
| <b>3.0-3.5</b>   | <b>School</b> | <b>9.8%</b>  |  |
| <b>4.0-4.5</b>   | <b>School</b> | <b>1.4%</b>  |   |
| <b>5.0-5.5</b>   | <b>School</b> | <b>0.7%</b>  |   |
| <b>6.0-6.5</b>   | <b>School</b> | <b>0.0%</b>  |   |
| <b>7.0-7.5</b>   | <b>School</b> | <b>0.0%</b>  |   |
| <b>8.0-8.5</b>   | <b>School</b> | <b>0.0%</b>  |   |
| <b>9.0-9.5</b>   | <b>School</b> | <b>0.0%</b>  |   |
| <b>10.0-10.5</b> | <b>School</b> | <b>0.0%</b>  |   |
| <b>11.0-11.5</b> | <b>School</b> | <b>0.0%</b>  |   |
| <b>N/A</b>       | <b>School</b> | <b>0.0%</b>  |   |

## ENGAGEMENT

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

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

|  |                 | 2024  | 4-year average |
|--|-----------------|-------|----------------|
| % of students exiting to further studies or full-time employment | <b>School</b>   | 13.7% | 11.0%          |
|  | Similar schools | 42.5% | 40.4%          |
|  | State           | 81.5% | 81.2%          |

### Average absence days per student

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

|                 |                 | 2025 | 4-year average |
|-----------------|-----------------|------|----------------|
| <b>Ungraded</b> | <b>School</b>   | 33.8 | 40.6           |
|                 | Similar schools | 39.6 | 39.6           |
|                 | State           | 40.0 | 39.6           |

### Attendance rate

Attendance rate refers to the average proportion of formal school days students in each year level attended.

|                 |               | 2025  |
|-----------------|---------------|-------|
| <b>Ungraded</b> | <b>School</b> | 82.9% |

## FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE AND POSITION

### FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE - OPERATING STATEMENT SUMMARY FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 DECEMBER 2025

Financial figures are as of 19 March 2026.

| Revenue                        | Actual              |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| Student Resource Package       | \$10,167,571        |
| Government Provided DET Grants | \$1,176,779         |
| Government Grants Commonwealth | \$8,410             |
| Government Grants State        | \$12,000            |
| Revenue Other                  | \$284,734           |
| Locally Raised Funds           | \$498,158           |
| Capital Grants                 | \$0                 |
| <b>Total Operating Revenue</b> | <b>\$12,147,653</b> |

| Equity  | Actual           |
|---|------------------|
| Equity (Social Disadvantage)                        | \$103,337        |
| Equity (Catch Up)                                   | \$0              |
| Equity (Social Disadvantage - Extraordinary Growth) | \$0              |
| <b>Equity Total</b>                                 | <b>\$103,337</b> |

The equity funding reported above is a subset of the overall revenue reported by the school.

| Expenditure                           | Actual      |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|
| Student Resource Package <sup>1</sup> | \$9,470,175 |
| Adjustments                           | \$800       |
| Books & Publications                  | \$5,673     |
| Camps/Excursions/Activities           | \$197,474   |
| Communication Costs                   | \$16,697    |
| Consumables                           | \$199,914   |
| Miscellaneous Expenses <sup>2</sup>   | \$82,474    |
| Agency Staff                          | \$111,263   |
| Professional Development              | \$32,742    |
| Equipment/Maintenance/Hire            | \$515,069   |
| Property Services                     | \$167,709   |

| Expenditure                           | Actual              |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Salaries & Allowances <sup>3</sup>    | \$283,621           |
| Support Services                      | \$41,603            |
| Trading & Fundraising                 | \$60,751            |
| Motor Vehicle Expenses                | \$46,948            |
| Travel & Subsistence                  | \$20,111            |
| Utilities                             | \$58,019            |
| <b>Total Operating Expenditure</b>    | <b>\$11,311,045</b> |
| <b>Net Operating Surplus/-Deficit</b> | <b>\$836,608</b>    |
| <b>Asset Acquisitions</b>             | <b>\$167,881</b>    |

<sup>1</sup> Student Resource Package Expenditure figures are subject to change during the reconciliation process.

<sup>2</sup> Miscellaneous Expenses include bank charges, administration expenses, insurance and taxation charges.

<sup>3</sup> Salaries and Allowances refers to school-level payroll.

## FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2025

| Funds Available               | Actual             |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| High Yield Investment Account | \$3,015,376        |
| Official Account              | \$21,952           |
| Other Accounts                | \$0                |
| <b>Total Funds Available</b>  | <b>\$3,037,328</b> |

| Financial Commitments                       | Actual             |
|---|--------------------|
| Operating Reserve                           | \$306,678          |
| Other Recurrent Expenditure                 | (\$45)             |
| Provision Accounts                          | \$0                |
| Funds Received in Advance                   | \$0                |
| School Based Programs                       | \$468,220          |
| Beneficiary/Memorial Accounts               | \$0                |
| Cooperative Bank Account                    | \$0                |
| Funds for Committees/Shared Arrangements    | \$14,209           |
| Repayable to the Department                 | \$0                |
| Asset/Equipment Replacement < 12 months     | \$100,000          |
| Capital - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months     | \$2,750,000        |
| Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months | \$0                |
| Asset/Equipment Replacement > 12 months     | \$0                |
| Capital - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months     | \$0                |
| Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months | \$0                |
| <b>Total Financial Commitments</b>          | <b>\$3,639,062</b> |

*All funds received from the Department of Education, 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.*