2025 Annual Report to the School Community

School Name: Nelson Park School (4768)

- 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 17 March 2026 at 10:56 AM by Melissa Vago (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 17 March 2026 at 10:56 AM by Melissa Vago (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

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

Nelson Park School is a specialist school located in Bell Park and Corio, within the city of Geelong, Victoria. The school provides high-quality educational programs for students with intellectual disability from primary through to secondary years across two campuses. Our vision is to empower every student to achieve their full potential and to live a meaningful, fulfilling, and connected life. This is underpinned by our core values of respect, try your best, good choices, and care for school. We are committed to fostering a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment where every student is known, valued, and supported to succeed.

In 2025, Nelson Park School had a total enrolment of 334 students. The school was supported by a dedicated team of 153 staff, including 45 teaching staff and 108 education support staff. Our leadership structure consisted of one Principal, three Assistant Principals, two Learning Specialists, and six Leading Teachers, ensuring strong instructional leadership and a clear focus on continuous improvement. The school also benefits from an allied health team, including two Occupational Therapists, one Speech Pathologist, two Allied Health Assistants, and an Art Therapist, who work collaboratively with teaching staff to support student learning, engagement, and wellbeing.

Nelson Park School serves students from Geelong and surrounding communities, supporting a diverse cohort of learners with a wide range of strengths and support needs. The school delivers individualised, evidence-informed programs aligned with the Victorian Curriculum and the Victorian Pathways Certificate and Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (transitioning to the Victorian Certificate of Education Vocational Major). Teaching and learning programs are designed to support student progress across curriculum areas, with a strong focus on communication, literacy, numeracy, personal and social capability, and applied learning. Programs are differentiated to meet each student at their point of need, ensuring access to meaningful and rigorous learning that supports achievement, engagement, and successful pathways beyond school. A notable feature of Nelson Park School is its dual-campus model, which enables the delivery of developmentally appropriate programs and supports smooth transitions across stages of learning. This structure also strengthens the school's ability to provide rich senior pathways aligned with the Victorian Certificate of Education Vocational Major. Senior students are supported to access a range of pathway opportunities, including structured work experience, trade tasting programs, and participation in community-based learning. These experiences enable students to explore their interests and strengths, develop employability skills, and build confidence in real-world settings. Through strong partnerships with local businesses, training providers, and community organisations, Nelson Park School ensures students are well prepared for a range of post-school options, including further education, training, and supported or open employment.

Strong partnerships with families, carers, and external agencies are central to our work. Through a collaborative and student-centred approach, Nelson Park School continues to build the capacity of students to develop independence, confidence, and the skills needed to actively participate in their community.

Progress towards strategic goals, student outcomes and student engagement

Learning

In 2025, Nelson Park School progressed the learning priorities with a strong focus on strengthening instructional practice and improving student learning outcomes. Whole-school approaches to literacy and numeracy instruction were implemented, alongside targeted professional learning and the development of Nelson Park School's instructional models for literacy and mathematics.

A key highlight was the improvement in reading outcomes across the school. Reading achievement reached **63%**, aligning closely with the improvement targets. This growth was supported through the introduction of a structured phonics approach using **Phonics Plus** and the implementation of the new **Nelson Park Literacy Instructional Model**, which provided staff with a consistent framework for teaching reading. Equity and targeted support remained a priority, with almost all **First Nations students** identified within the priority cohort supported through tailored reading intervention plans to strengthen their literacy development.

Progress was also made in mathematics, with **Number achievement increasing to 56%.** While improvement was evident, the full impact of the work is expected to continue into 2026 as staff build confidence implementing the **A–D Mathematics curriculum** and the staged rollout of the new **Nelson Park School Maths Instructional Model**. Strengthening the consistent use of formative assessment data in mathematics remains a focus for the next phase of improvement.

Student engagement in learning showed positive growth. **Stimulated Learning increased from 66% in 2024 to 71% in 2025**, reflecting the school's work to design more engaging learning opportunities and strengthen student voice in learning. Similarly, **Academic Emphasis increased from 63% to 68%, exceeding the target of 65%**, demonstrating a stronger school-wide focus on high expectations, clear learning intentions and consistent instructional practice.

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) continued to embed improvement cycles to strengthen teaching practice. Strong implementation was evident in the Specialist PLC, Facilitator PLC and Tier 1 School-wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) team, where formative assessment data is being used to monitor student progress and adjust instruction. Building greater consistency across all PLCs will be a priority in 2026 to further strengthen the impact on student learning outcomes.

Wellbeing

In 2025, Nelson Park School continued to strengthen its whole-school approach to wellbeing through the development of clear processes, consistent behaviour expectations and the ongoing implementation of School-Wide Positive Behaviour Supports (SWPBS). The school focused on

strengthening tiered responses, improving staff confidence in behaviour support practices and using data to inform wellbeing strategies.

A key improvement during the year was the refinement of the **tiered referral process**. A Term 3 review identified limited clarity for staff regarding the purpose and steps involved in referring students for additional support. In response, the process was revised and streamlined through Compass to enable more efficient access to wellbeing supports. Visual flowcharts outlining the process were developed and shared with staff, improving clarity and consistency in how referrals are made and responded to across the school.

Professional learning was also delivered to all staff on **Positive Classroom Management Strategies (PCMS) 4 – Discouraging Inappropriate Behaviours**, strengthening staff understanding of the school's consequence process. Visual flowcharts were provided to Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), which were adapted for different student cohorts. Behaviour expectations and consequences were explicitly taught across the school, and visual supports are now displayed in multiple learning environments to reinforce consistency.

Restorative practices continued to be embedded as part of the school's approach to responding to behaviour. A Compass template was introduced to support the documentation of **restorative conversations**, which are regularly facilitated by members of the leadership team. These conversations have informed the development of behaviour contracts within the secondary school. Increasingly, staff are requesting leadership support and beginning to facilitate restorative conversations more independently. Students are also demonstrating greater ownership by initiating restorative conversations following conflict.

The **SWPBS Tier 1 team** continued to lead the implementation of preventative wellbeing strategies. Compass behaviour data was used to guide explicit teaching of expected behaviours, and the team adapted the SWPBS Big 5 planning tool to better meet the needs of PLC planning at Nelson Park School.

Consistent staff practices were further supported through Staff Learning and Morning Meeting PLC planning structures. Coaching was provided in response to student data and referrals, and the SWPBS coach trialled the Practice-Based Coaching model, sharing feedback with Department SWPBS coaches to strengthen practice across the school.

Engagement

In 2025, Nelson Park School continued to strengthen student engagement through a range of targeted programs and learning experiences designed to support connection, participation and student voice. Data from the **Attitudes to School Survey (AtoSS)** indicated positive outcomes in areas related to student engagement and sense of belonging, reflecting the school's focus on creating inclusive and engaging learning environments.

A range of specialist programs were implemented to support diverse student interests and learning needs. These programs provided students with opportunities to engage in practical, hands-on learning experiences and develop skills beyond the traditional classroom. The **Future Ready program** continued to support senior students in developing independence, work-related skills and pathways beyond school, with participation supporting students to build confidence and real-world learning experiences.

Whole-school programs such as **Respectful Relationships** were embedded into classroom practice, supporting students to develop positive relationships, emotional awareness and strategies for managing social interactions. Additional programs, including **Bike Education**, therapy groups and targeted engagement groups, provided further opportunities for students to build confidence, regulate emotions and strengthen their connection to school.

School-wide initiatives also supported student connection and belonging. **Hands on Learning (HOL)** activities created opportunities for students to work collaboratively across classrooms and celebrate school community events, while **Blue Crew** initiatives promoted positive behaviour and student leadership. The **Goopma Ngitj program** continued to support cultural engagement and inclusion, providing opportunities for students to connect with culture and community.

Targeted supports were also implemented for students requiring additional engagement strategies. The **Flexible Learning Option (FLO) program** supported students to re-engage with learning through personalised and flexible approaches, ensuring continuity in their education.

Student voice remained a key component of engagement strategies. **Student Learning Conferences (SLCs)** provided opportunities for students to reflect on their learning and contribute to goal setting, while **Student Support Group (SSG) meetings** ensured personalised learning plans were developed in partnership with families.

Engagement in literacy and numeracy was further supported through **Writing Launches** and **Maths Launches**, which promoted consistent instructional approaches across classrooms. Camps, excursions and the school's camp and excursion scope and sequence also provided purposeful learning experiences designed to build social skills, independence and connection to the school community.

Student **attendance** data indicates that absence rates for students in ungraded settings are broadly comparable to both similar schools and the state average, with the school's four-year average slightly lower than that of similar schools. These patterns are consistent with those typically observed in specialist settings and highlight the importance of ongoing strategies to support student engagement and regular attendance. Attendance was monitored regularly throughout the year to identify emerging patterns and enable early intervention where concerns arose. Strategies to support improved attendance included proactive communication with families, Student Support Group (SSG) meetings, and personalised engagement plans to address individual barriers to regular school attendance.

Other highlights from the school year

Nelson Park School celebrated a number of important events and initiatives throughout 2025 that strengthened connections within the school community and provided meaningful experiences for students. Whole-school events such as community celebrations, assemblies and Hands on Learning projects provided opportunities for students to come together, celebrate achievements and develop a strong sense of belonging within the school.

Camps and excursions continued to play an important role in supporting student development including our senior secondary interstate camp. These experiences were carefully planned through the school's camp and excursion scope and sequence to ensure opportunities for students to build independence, develop social skills and engage in learning beyond the

classroom. Many students participated in a range of local and regional excursions that complemented classroom learning and supported the development of life skills.

The school also strengthened partnerships with community organisations to provide additional opportunities for students. Participation in the Services and Futures Expo enabled senior students to explore future pathways, connect with local service providers and learn about employment and post-school options.

Students were also involved in a variety of physical activity and wellbeing initiatives throughout the year. Programs such as Bike Education and Active Schools supported students to build confidence, independence and safety skills while promoting health and wellbeing.

These highlights reflect Nelson Park School's ongoing commitment to providing engaging, inclusive and meaningful experiences that support students to develop confidence, independence and strong connections within their school community.

Financial performance

Nelson Park School continues to remain in a sound financial position finishing the year 2025 with a surplus.

School funds contributed to the capital works at our senior Illinois Campus which continue into 2026.

Nelson Park School Council entered into an agreement with Woolworths Group to run a 'Mini Woolies' program in 2025. The program aimed to provide students with practical skills and confidence that could support them in gaining similar part-time employment opportunities in the future.

At the end of the year, the agreement concluded. Following a review, it was determined that the program did not align with our current curriculum framework for F–9 students on the Libau campus. Additionally, the space used for the program is now required to support increased 1:1 and small group tutoring programs focused on improving students' literacy outcomes.

As in previous years, Equity funds were allocated to support our positive behaviour approach including the running of the Gotcha shop, professional learning for staff and salaries for specialist programs.

State Government Grant received for the Futures Ready Program were utilised to engage our students within the community.

For more detailed information regarding our school please visit our website at https://www.nelsonpark.vic.edu.au/

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 328 students were enrolled at this school in 2025, 93 female and 233 male. 5% had English as an additional language and 12% 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 **High**.

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**	**82.7%**
	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**	**80.8%**
	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	1.0%
B	School	5.2%
C	School	10.5%
D	School	18.1%
0.5	School	0.0%
F-F.5	School	23.6%
1.0-1.5	School	22.0%
2.0-2.5	School	10.7%
3.0-3.5	School	6.6%
4.0-4.5	School	2.0%
5.0-5.5	School	0.3%
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	5.1%

Teacher Judgement of student achievement Mathematics

Percent of results at each achievement level in Mathematics

		2025
A	School	2.4%
B	School	5.1%
C	School	14.5%
D	School	14.1%
0.5	School	0.0%
F-F.5	School	22.0%

		2025
1.0-1.5	School	24.3%
2.0-2.5	School	12.5%
3.0-3.5	School	4.3%
4.0-4.5	School	0.8%
5.0-5.5	School	0.0%
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	5.1%

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	**School**	**18.2%**	**36.0%**
	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
Prep - 6	State	21.5	21.7
Year 7 - 12	State	30.2	29.4
Ungraded	**School**	**NDA**	**36.9**
	Similar schools	39.6	39.6
	State	40.0	39.6

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	$16,063,910
Government Provided DET Grants	$2,463,274
Government Grants Commonwealth	$0
Government Grants State	$16,970
Revenue Other	$152,877
Locally Raised Funds	$165,323
Capital Grants	$0
Total Operating Revenue	**$18,862,354**

Equity	Actual
Equity (Social Disadvantage)	$497,871
Equity (Catch Up)	$0
Equity (Social Disadvantage - Extraordinary Growth)	$0
Equity Total	**$497,871**

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

Expenditure	Actual
Student Resource Package[1]	$13,021,765
Adjustments	$0
Books & Publications	$3,992
Camps/Excursions/Activities	$163,624
Communication Costs	$14,158
Consumables	$288,797
Miscellaneous Expenses[2]	$102,552
Agency Staff	$282,711
Professional Development	$67,979
Equipment/Maintenance/Hire	$228,847
Property Services	$429,032

Expenditure	Actual
Salaries & Allowances[3]	$765,715
Support Services	$333,758
Trading & Fundraising	$28,404
Motor Vehicle Expenses	$17,878
Travel & Subsistence	$1,000
Utilities	$72,447
Total Operating Expenditure	**$15,822,657**
Net Operating Surplus/-Deficit	**$3,039,697**
Asset Acquisitions	**$216,145**

[1] Student Resource Package Expenditure figures are subject to change during the reconciliation process.

[2] Miscellaneous Expenses include bank charges, administration expenses, insurance and taxation charges.

[3] Salaries and Allowances refers to school-level payroll.

FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2025

Funds Available	Actual
High Yield Investment Account	$2,196,777
Official Account	$208,237
Other Accounts	$0
Total Funds Available	**$2,405,014**

Financial Commitments	Actual
Operating Reserve	$466,815
Other Recurrent Expenditure	$0
Provision Accounts	$0
Funds Received in Advance	$0
School Based Programs	$0
Beneficiary/Memorial Accounts	$0
Cooperative Bank Account	$0
Funds for Committees/Shared Arrangements	$0
Repayable to the Department	$0
Asset/Equipment Replacement < 12 months	$0
Capital - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months	$202,545
Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds < 12 months	$0
Asset/Equipment Replacement > 12 months	$14,500
Capital - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months	$0
Maintenance - Buildings/Grounds > 12 months	$0
Total Financial Commitments	**$683,860**

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.