

berengarra

a chance for change

Berengarra School
Strategic Plan 2020-2025

Commitment to Child Safety

Berengarra takes a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse and is fully committed to ensuring that its strategies, policies, procedures and practices meet all Child Safety Standards as specified in Ministerial Order No. 870 (2015)

About this Strategy

This Strategic Plan sets the direction for Berengarra School for the next five years. The intention of this plan is to be innovative and future-focused, whilst building on the strong foundation of previous strategies.

Philosophy

Berengarra School is committed to providing a safe, supportive and inclusive environment for all students, staff and members of our community. Our school recognises the importance of the partnership between our school and parents and carers to support student learning, engagement and wellbeing. We share a commitment to and responsibility for creating an inclusive and safe school environment for our students.

Purpose

Our purpose is to provide an innovative, alternative setting for students with social and emotional challenges. Our programs provide the opportunity to re-engage in learning through a quality skills-based curriculum in a wellbeing-centred environment.

School Overview

Berengarra School is a specialist independent secondary school for students in Years 7-12. The school is non-denominational and co-educational for students with social and emotional challenges and disabilities.

The school currently has two campuses located in Box Hill and Chadstone. The Box Hill Campus caters for students in Years 7-10 and the Pathways Campus is a senior campus for students Years in 10-12.

Our highly experienced staff deliver the Victorian Curriculum, Victorian Certificates of Applied Learning (VCAL), Vocational Education and Training Certificates (VET) and School-Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships (SBATs).

All Berengarra School students require specialist support to meet their diverse social and emotional challenges with which they present. Students commonly present with a variety of mental health issues and/or learning disabilities.

All students who enrol at Berengarra School have had challenges finding success in mainstream education. At Berengarra School, we aim to offer the very best learning environment, curriculum and processes to meet the needs of our students.

At the core of Berengarra School's model is fostering a sense of belonging within our school community and nurturing students' strengths and abilities to improve educational outcomes. Berengarra School offers hope for success and a path to future engagement in education and employment.

Vision

Our vision is to be recognised as a leading, independent, specialist school for students experiencing significant social and emotional challenges. We will provide an innovative and effective curriculum in a wellbeing-centred environment which enables students to re-connect with learning and engage successfully in further education and future employment.

Aims

- **Our students** will address their social and emotional challenges and achieve success in a nurturing and supportive learning community.
- **Our programs** will utilise an innovative skills-based curriculum and implement emotional regulation techniques to engage students effectively in their learning.
- **Our staff** will provide a nurturing learning community and build strong relationships with our students.
- **Our community** will provide opportunities for understanding, flexibility, belonging and diversity.

Values

- **Hope** – moving forward with confidence and a ‘chance for change’ to create a positive future.
- **Belonging** – fostering a deep sense of school community where everyone is accepted and celebrated for who they are in a respectful, inclusive and compassionate environment.
- **Nurturing** – empowering growth and learning in a safe and supportive community.
- **Success** – being guided to accept responsibility and face new challenges to achieve our goals.

Statement from the Board Chairperson and Principal

The Berengarra School Strategic Plan 2020 - 2025 has been developed in consultation with the School Board, Leadership, Staff and Community.

Central to this plan is the concept of school connectedness. Students are more likely to engage in positive behaviours and succeed academically when they feel connected to school and the school community. Connectedness can be demonstrated through improved learning and wellbeing outcomes, engagement, attendance and successful transitions within and beyond the school experience.

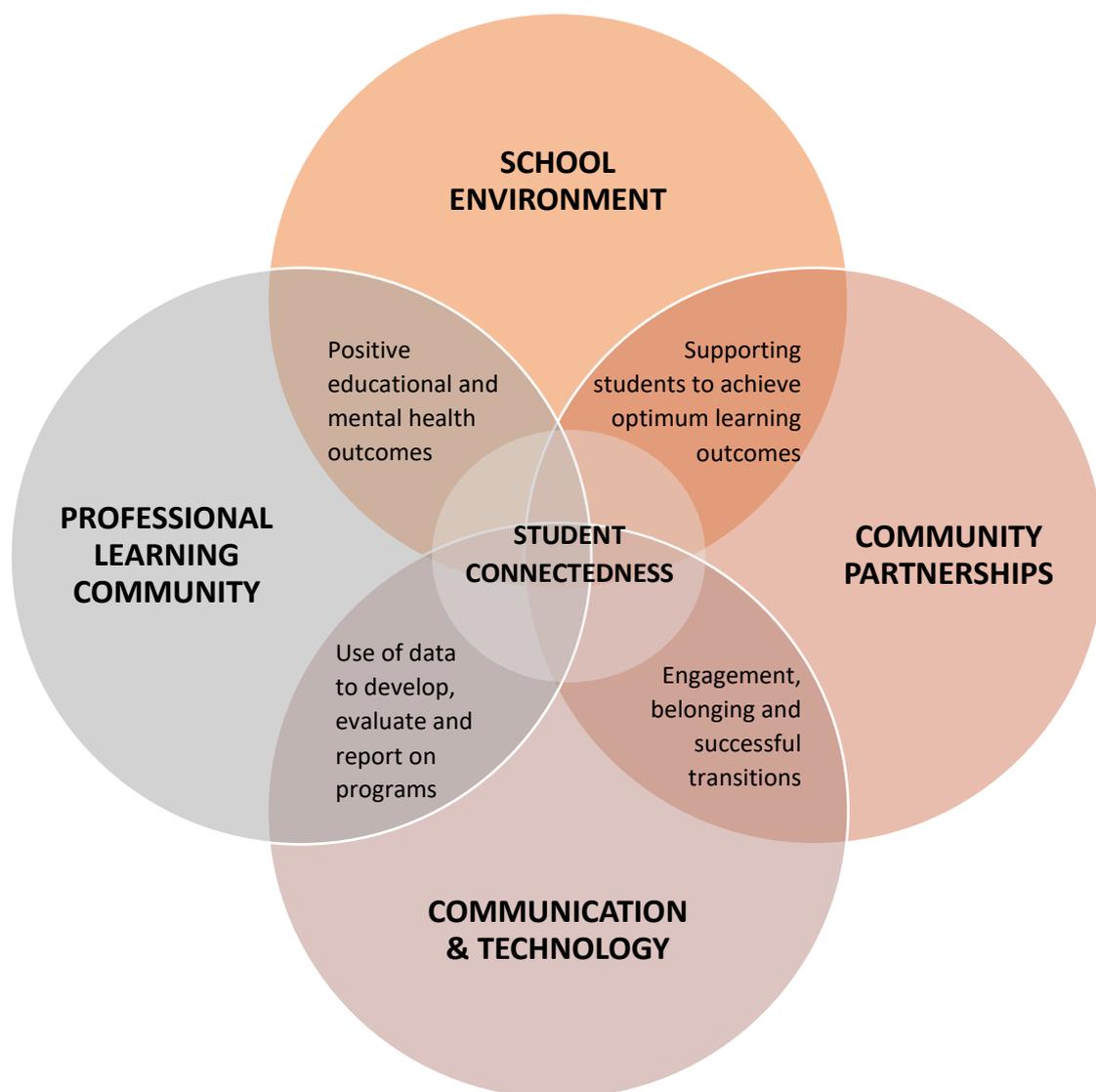
For Berengarra School students, many of whom have found mainstream school a challenge, connectedness to schooling in a supportive and inclusive environment is a critical factor in their on-going social development.

The strategies in this plan have been designed to enhance school connectedness across the whole school community and reflect the school's values of belonging, hope, nurturing and success for its students.

The Berengarra School Board and School community are committed to the implementation of this Strategic Plan as we work together to support our students to realise their full potential.

- P. Siostrom, Board Chairperson & J.Finnerty, Principal

Strategic Direction



Developed by the Berengarra School Board

Goal 1 – Student Connectedness

Students are confident that all adults in the school community care about them as individuals and are committed to their learning and safety. School is seen as important to their future and they have the self-assurance to engage fully in their own learning, to relate positively to their peer group, and to participate in school and community activities.

Priorities

- 1) Student Voice
- 2) Student Wellbeing
- 3) Embedding values

Initiatives	Outcomes
Student Voice	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a framework for student input into decision-making i.e. 'Student Board' of leadership roles where students can provide input in school programs/curriculum • Structured Home Group process – voice, respect, non-judgmental • Expand ISV survey to collect qualitative evidence of 'connectedness' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students feel empowered to make suggestions for improvement and feel a sense of ownership in the school • There is a consistent approach to student voice across all home groups and campuses • Survey data is analysed for trends with impact plans developed for areas of improvement
Wellbeing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build on current foundations to create a student wellbeing model founded on evidence-based practice • Clear roles and responsibilities are allocated to the Wellbeing Team in a wellbeing model implementation plan • Research and develop networks with service providers and external agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The approach to student wellbeing is easily articulated, supportive and informs teaching, learning and behaviour management practices within the school • The Wellbeing Team is well structured and highly skilled to deliver responsive, high-quality support to students and families • The school has highly developed networks and relationships with external agencies and service providers providing clear and easy pathways for students to access required supports
Embedding the Values	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilise Home Groups to form social contracts and embed the school values into student thinking and everyday experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students take ownership of school values

Goal 2 – Professional Learning Community

Provide staff with time and resources to advance their professional knowledge, skills, competence and effectiveness in order to deliver evidence-based, best practice programs which engage students and achieve optimum teaching and learning outcomes.

Priorities

- 1) Berengarra School Model
- 2) Curriculum
- 3) Building Capabilities
- 4) Staff Wellbeing

Initiatives	Outcomes
Berengarra School Model	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop the 'Berengarra School Model' which is informed by evidence-based practice recognised to be effective for students with social and emotional disabilities who are struggling with school engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a documented model that underpins the school to inform practice and decision making around all aspects of the program
Curriculum	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the curriculum meets the specific needs of our student cohort and is delivered in an engaging way Continuous refinement of the curriculum using the Victorian Curriculum and VCAA that best suits our students Develop customised metrics to track student progress Update teaching materials to provide diverse and stimulating lessons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is an engaging, rigorous, and purposeful curriculum that meets the needs of our students The school has a curriculum in place that is skills-based and drives student achievement whilst continuing to meet Victorian Curriculum and VCAA standards Measurements are in place to track the effectiveness of interventions to support engagement in learning There is a consistent approach to teaching and learning across the school
Building Capabilities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop formalised staff work planning process and regular feedback structures Develop a cross-campus peer coaching program Develop an annual training plan for staff with regular forums for knowledge sharing Training staff in key capabilities to understand and deliver the Berengarra School Model and monitor/appraise outcomes Create structured networking with teachers at other schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a consistent approach to staff work planning and development There are mechanisms in place for staff to share best practice and to build capabilities around the VIT guidelines Staff are highly trained, skilled, supervised and supported to deliver responsive, high-quality support to students and families. Teaching capabilities continue to evolve utilising best practice, informed by the Berengarra School Model

Initiatives	Outcomes
Staff Wellbeing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a staff wellbeing system which includes support structures, mentoring, regular check-ins, access to professional services • Develop an annual program of staff wellbeing exercises including mindfulness training and wellbeing days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A positive workplace exists for staff with an established system of support to promote staff wellbeing

Goal 3 – School Environment

Undertake a staged capital program aimed at providing a contemporary, welcoming and safe school environment which impacts positively on student motivation, effective learning time, staff morale and perception of the school by families and the wider community.

Priorities

- 1) Capital Development
- 2) Compliance

Initiatives	Outcomes
Capital Development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake an audit of the current campus facilities and their capacity to support the future Berengarra School Model • Create a capital development program for the whole school which provides flexible learning spaces and modern facilities for both students and staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school buildings are developed to provide welcoming, modern and flexible spaces that support student success and emotional regulation • Staff have productive workspaces and classrooms that are both creative and enjoyable
Compliance	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update the risk framework to identify business-level risks • Update annual essential safety measures on the school buildings to ensure compliance • Develop a structured business continuity plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Berengarra School maintains safe and compliant buildings that meet all legislative and compliance requirements • The business continuity provides resilience to the school structure and operation

Goal 4 – Communication & Technology

Invest in operating systems which facilitate effective communication and provide secure processes for storage, organisation and retrieval of information across all aspects of school operations.

Priorities

- 1) Digitised Model
- 2) Analytics
- 3) Systems
- 4) Training

Initiatives	Outcomes
Digitised Model	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilise Microsoft Office 365 suite and Synergetic database to create a fully online environment to manage: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communication with parents - Student reporting and records - Student transition plans between campuses - Online engagement activities (building on lessons learnt from the fully online delivery model) - Policy, procedure, lesson plan and resource library 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information is easily accessible with controlled and secure data management • Consistent use of systems to register permissions and compliance requirement • Information is easily retrievable to meet evidentiary requirements for a range of purposes • Staff members have one single source of truth to reference policies, processes and store information
Analytics	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data-driven analytics used to track student progress • Conduct biennial staff, student and parent surveys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trend analysis can be undertaken to identify areas of student improvement and attendance • There is evidence of an uplift in student and staff and parent satisfaction within the school community
Systems and Training	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update IT fleet every three years to provide fit-for-purpose technology to support student learning outcomes • Review software capabilities (e.g. Adobe Creative) • Ensure all staff are trained to maximise the use of computer hardware and software • Regularly review server capabilities to ensure functionality for all campuses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usable, efficient and secure technology supports teaching and learning • Staff are able to utilise technology to enrich the student learning experience • Software is utilised to enhance lessons to support curriculum outcomes • Hardware is up-to-date, controlled and cyber safe

Goal 5 – Community Partnerships

Develop effective educational partnerships with families and the wider community which provide opportunities to achieve improved learning, enhance wellbeing and engagement, and contribute to successful transitions from school to further education or employment.

Priorities

- 1) Community Engagement
- 2) Marketing and Promotion
- 3) Educational Networks
- 4) External Partnerships

Initiatives	Outcomes
Community Engagement	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a communication and engagement plan for keeping students and parents/carers up to date with school news and information • Parents/carers can utilise the school website and community portal to access information • Utilise open days, ESG days and school community days to build constructive relationships with parents/carers/guardians and students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The communications and engagement plan improves communication with the school community • The website becomes the single source of truth for up-to-date information about the school • There is a measured improvement in community connection (evidenced through biennial parent/carer/guardian survey)
Marketing and Promotion	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the new website which reflects the school direction and practices • Clear messaging, language and terminology is used in all promotional materials to serve all external networks • Utilise professional networks to showcase the work of the school and demonstrate leadership and capability in working in the social and emotional disability arena • Develop strong relationships with secondary schools to ensure appropriate students are referred to Berengarra School 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an up-to-date, functional and aesthetically engaging website which increases enrolment • There is an increase in enquiries/enrolments as the school proposition is clear to prospective students and for professional referrals • The school profile increases and Berengarra School is seen as a leader in social and emotional education • Local secondary schools know about the school and are a reference point for students that meet the Berengarra School criteria

Initiatives	Outcomes
Education Networks (Supporting the Student Journey)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop strong networks and relationships with external agencies and service providers to provide clear and easy pathways for students to access required supports • Utilise 'Like-Schools' network and Independent Schools Victoria to share best practice and provide a clear voice from the independent sector to Government • Form partnerships with similar schools and create 'feeder schools' through close relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationships are formed with service providers and agencies • Strong relationships are built with 'like schools' and knowledge and experience is shared. Support and guidance are disseminated to staff • Close links are formed with a set number of schools to provide continuity in enrolments • Knowledge and best practice is shared which continues to evolve school practices
External Partnerships (Formal Connections)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create industry partnerships which enhance curriculum outcomes and transition pathways for students into higher education and/or employment • Develop a school-wide process for identifying and seeking grants/philanthropic support • Seek opportunities for networking within the youth mental health sector and other relevant community agencies • Undertake proactive engagement with services and professionals working with the student cohort 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthened industry partnerships provide a greater range of transition pathways for students into higher education and/or employment • There is more financial support and greater efficacy of outcomes from grants/philanthropic support • Enduring partnerships are formed with philanthropic bodies and other sources of additional funding • There are clearer pathways for referrals, student support and collaboration with youth mental health and other relevant community agencies • There is a greater awareness of Berengarra School within the youth mental health sector and other services working with the student cohort