



# Berengarra School

Hope Belonging Nurturing Success

## **Annual Report 2023**

## **Statement of Commitment**

The Principal attests that:

- All teachers at the school are Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) registered
- The school has met the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) minimum standards for registration (except where any exemptions apply)
- All expenses and commitments of funds have been to support educational outcomes and operational needs
- The school complies with the Child Safe Standards as prescribed in Ministerial Order 1359

### **Child Safe Commitment**

Berengarra School is a child safe organisation which welcomes all children, young people and their families.

We are committed to providing environments where our students are safe and feel safe, where their participation is valued, their views respected, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Our child safe policies, strategies and practices are inclusive of the needs of all children and students.

We have no tolerance for child abuse and take proactive steps to identify and manage any risks of harm to students in our school environments.

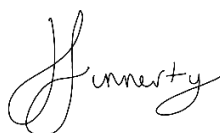
We promote positive relationships between students and adults and between students and their peers. These relationships are based on trust and respect.

We take proactive steps to identify and manage any risk of harm to students in our school environment. When child safety concerns are raised or identified, we treat these seriously and respond promptly and thoroughly.

Particular attention is given to the child safety needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, international students, students with disabilities, those unable to live at home, children and young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, queer, intersex and asexual (LGBTQIA+) and other students experiencing risk or vulnerability. Inappropriate or harmful behaviour targeting students based on these or other characteristics, such as racism or homophobia, are not tolerated at our school, and any instances identified will be addressed with appropriate consequences.

Child safety is a shared responsibility. Every person involved in our school has an important role in promoting child safety and wellbeing and promptly raising any issues or concerns about a child's safety.

We are committed to regularly reviewing our child safe practices, and seeking input from our students, families, staff, and volunteers to inform our ongoing strategies.



Justin Finnerty  
Principal- Berengarra School

## **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 separate campuses in both Box Hill and Chadstone. The Box Hill Campus caters for students in Years 7-10 and the Pathways Campus, renamed the Chadstone Campus at the beginning of 2023, is a senior campus catering for students Years 10-12.

Our highly experienced staff deliver the Victorian Curriculum, Victorian Certificate of Education Vocational Major (VCE VM) and the Victorian Pathways Certificate (VPC), 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.

Students who enrol at Berengarra School have all had challenges finding success in mainstream education. Berengarra School offers the very best learning environment, curriculum and processes to meet the needs of its 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.

## **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**

Berengarra School's 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.

## **Vision**

The vision of Berengarra School 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 reconnect 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.

### Members of the School Board in 2023

#### CURRENT MEMBERS & DIRECTORS

NAME	QUALIFICATIONS
P K Siostrom (Chairperson)	Dip. Teach., Grad. Dip. Ed.
M E Cole (Deputy Chairperson)	B.A., Dip Ed., Cert. IV Training & Assessment, B. Midwifery
E J Dempsey	B.Law/Ed., G.Dip Leg. Prac., M. S.Sc.
H M Fisk	ACA, B. Bus (Acc), Dip. Lang.
R Congleton	BA (Hons) Politics
D Nicholson	CPA, B Bus (Acc)

#### PRINCIPAL & BUSINESS MANAGER

J.A. Finnerty (Principal)	B.Sc., PGCE
S Robinson (Business Manager)	MBA B Bus (Acc & Mkt) GAICD

#### PAST MEMBERS & DIRECTORS

P M Cutts B.Sc.(Hons), Dip. Ed., G. Cert. (Car. Dev.)- Resigned June 2023

### Curriculum

The primary goal of the curriculum is to focus on the individual needs of students and provide learning opportunities in a caring and supportive community, whilst maintaining academic standards. Students are supported and encouraged to develop confidence in learning and themselves as they reconnect and re-engage with education. The curriculum across the school is skills-based.

The school continues to utilise creative strategies to engage students with social/emotional, learning disabilities and challenging behaviour in learning. These practices aim to provide a safe, nurturing school environment that helps students develop as learners.

### **Box Hill Campus**

The Box Hill Campus caters for students in Years 7 to 10. Our curriculum is informed by the Victorian Curriculum. Classroom learning is conducted in mixed-ability classes with the activities, tasks and outcomes carefully adjusted to meet a diverse range of learning goals and abilities.

Students are taught in their Home Groups that are mixed-ability classes across the whole curriculum. The Home Group model focuses on building strong positive relationships. This

model is extremely beneficial for building strong connections and social groups and allowing teachers to gain a deeper knowledge of our student's learning needs.

The average class size in numeracy and literacy is ten students, with one teacher and an Education Support staff member. The curriculum covers Mathematics, English, Art, Food Technology, Humanities, Managing Me (Personal Development), Physical Education and Drama. Students are taught a skilled based curriculum across a broad range of subjects areas, while learning to regulate their emotions and improve their social connections.

Students participate in a 'Managing Me' session each week with a focus on the personal development of the individual. The program is supported by the school's Wellbeing Team and covered topics such as emotional intelligence, self-regulation and wellbeing, with a particular focus on stress management, healthy eating and drug/alcohol prevention.

### **Chadstone Campus**

The Chadstone Campus has a capacity of 32 students, providing learning spaces over two sites based in community buildings owned by Monash City Council and Housing First Ltd. respectively.

The Chadstone program offered VCE VM and VPC in 2023. To be awarded these certificates students are required to complete a number of units in Literacy, Numeracy, Personal Development skills and Work-Related Skills. Students also must complete a Vocational Education and Training (VET) course as well as a work placement.

The Chadstone program offers the opportunity for students to complete VET in Retail and Public Safety, and also assist students with the option to engage in other VET at Technical and Further Education (TAFE) institutions and/or Registered Training Organisations (RTO's).

Berengarra School has a long-standing connection with Housing First. Through this partnership, our students assist in running a Community Market for the Housing First tenants alongside Housing First volunteers. The Market offers our students the opportunity to complete the VCE VM Work Related Skills units, whilst gaining valuable work experience.

Our partnership with Flexible Training Solutions assists the school in delivering certificates in Retail and together with our on-site trading café, CafEducation students can complete Certificates II and III in Retail Operations while gaining work experience in a retail environment. As students progress with confidence in the Café's processes, they are offered the opportunity of the School-Based Apprenticeship and Traineeships (SBAT's) scheme allowing for their employment as a trainee. In 2023, the café offered structured workplace training/experience to six students and SBAT employment to eight students.

Berengarra School's partnership with Magenta Safety Training provides students across both campuses with the opportunity to complete units in Certificate II Public Safety. This course is offered to students fortnightly.

### Summary of qualifications obtained in 2023

Course/Certificate	Student number
VCE VM	8
VPC	2
Certificate II Retail	10
Certificate III Retail	3
Full Certificate II Public Safety	3
Students Graduated	10

### Student Report

The total number of students enrolled at Berengarra School during 2023 was 87.

Berengarra School received Government recurrent funding for 77 students for the 2023 school year (based on the August census date).

The following student attendance is outlined below:

Year	Box Hill	Chadstone	Total
2023	77.19%	76.74%	77.03%
2022	64.14%	53.36%	57.42%
2021	68.37%	62.28%	65.75%
2020	62.2%	69.3%	65.4%

### Student leaving

A total of 35 students departed Berengarra School in 2023

### Destinations of Students Post Berengarra School

Destination	%
Further Education	17
Mainstream School	29
Other alternative educational setting	23
Employment	14
Other	17

Students transition from the Box Hill Campus to the Chadstone Campus at the beginning of the year and mid-semester. In 2023, eleven students who were enrolled at the Box Hill campus transitioned to the Chadstone campus. All of these students undertook a week-long transition before moving to the Chadstone Campus.

## Student Assessment

The Box Hill curriculum is informed by the Victorian Curriculum (2017) and employs a skills-based approach to devising learning opportunities. Learning outcomes are measured using teacher judgement across a range of subjects.

At the Chadstone Campus students complete VCE VM or VPC as well as completing Vocational Education and Training (VET) certificate. Assessment is based on achieving competencies for these qualifications in accordance with the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA).

## NAPLAN

In 2023, eight students completed NAPLAN, due to the low number of participants reporting results would not be appropriate or meaningful.

## Staff Report

A total of **37** staff were employed during the 2023 year.

Staff employed (end of term 4) – **Total 31.6 FTE**

The following list shows the roles of employees at the end of Term 4.

Principal	1 Full time
Head of Campus	2 x Full time
Business Manager	0.7
HR Manager	0.2
Head of Wellbeing	1 Full time
Teaching Staff	5 Full time
	3 @ .6 FTE
	1@ .8 FTE
Counsellors	2 Full time
Education Support Staff	8 Full time
	1@ .8 FTE
	1@ .2 FTE
Cafe Manager	1 Full time
Office staff	1 Full Time
ICT Manager	1 @ .8 FTE

No staff identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

Ten staff members left their positions in 2023.

Eight staff members were hired in 2023

## Staff Employed in 2023

Principal – J. A. Finnerty – B.Sc., P. G. C. Ed., Cert. IV T.A.

Head of Campus (Box Hill Campus) – T. Mahon- M. Ed, Post Grad Dip Ed Admin, B Ed, Dip Teach

Head of Campus (Chadstone Campus) – C. Salton – Dip. Y.W., Cert. IV T.A., Dip. VET, Dip. H&C., Dip. C.W.W.

Business Manager – S. Robinson- MBA B Bus (Acc & Mkt) GAICD  
G.Marin- B. Economics

HR Manager- K. Subach- M.Bus (IR/HR), B. Bus (IR/HR)

Head of Wellbeing- M. L. Hamilton – B. Teach., B.Mus., Grad. Dip. Div., Adv. Dip. Couns.

### *Teachers*

J. C. Bustos - B.Ed., Grad. Dip. Sp. Ed., Dip. Ed., Dip. Couns.

G. C. De Lacy – B. Ed.

J. K. Mason – M.Pub & Edit., B. A., Grad. Dip. Sec Ed., Adv. Dip. Eng Tech.

L. R. Perry – M. Ed. Sp. Ed., Dip. Couns. & Careers, Dip. Ap. Sc.

M. E. Sakkos – B.Sc., M. Ed., Grad. Dip. Sec Ed., Cert. IV T.A

M. Sneesby – B. Ap. Sc., B. Teach.

C. G. Vickers – Dip. Teach, Dip. Couns.

L. H-T. Vuong – M. Teach., B. Bus.

K. C. Wilson – B. Sc., B. Ed., Cert IV language

A. L. Zvirbulis -Woods – B.A., Dip. Ed., Dip. Health Couns.

M.Jarett- M Teach, B Art

K McLachlan- B. Science, M. Science, Post Grad. Dip. Teach.

S Browne- M. Science, Dip. Ed, Fitness, Cert. Football Coaching

### *Counsellors*

E. K. Manti – M.Coun., B. A., B. Teach

C. M. McIntyre – B. Social Work, Cert. IV Mental Health, Cert. IV T.A.

### *Education Support Staff*

K. L. Chan – B. Ap. Sc.

O. Husnu – Cert. IV Youth Work, Dip. Arts, Cert. IV T.A. Cert. IV OHS

C. McAuley – Dip. Social Care

A.McEwan – Cert IV Youth Work

S. Raghu – M. Sc., B. Sc, Dip. Pre & PS Teaching

R. Skenderasi - B. Acct & Fin., Cert. III. Acct & Fin.

S. Thambavita – B. Bus

K. A. Vozzo- Cert. Ed. Support

L. Das- M Teach

E. Suric- Cert IV TAE, Cert IV Youth Work, Cert III Com. services, Cert II and III Retail

P. Vallenge-Dip. Ed., B. Arts, Post Grad. Dip. Ed

I. Clements- Cert IV Youth Work

### *Office Staff*

S. M. Doorbar – Dip. Bus. Mgt., Cert. T.A.

P. Woodyatt – Dip. ECEC

### *CafEducation Manager*

M. D. Nevett – Dip. H&C Ops.



## Absenteeism

Year	%Total Days Absent
2023	4.4%
2022	7.4%
2021	4.2%
2020	4.9%

This table has been recalculated to show the staff absentee percentage based on the number of days personal leave taken divided by the total Staff FTE multiplied by 200 workdays per annum.

## Staff/Student Ratio

Below is a table of staff/student ratios (the number of staff includes all teaching and non-teaching staff based on census figures).

Year	Number of Students at census	Number of Staff FTE	Staff/Student Ratio
2023	77	30	2.6
2022	77	30.4	2.5
2021	71	29.2	2.2
2020	63	28.8	2.9

## Employee Assistance Program

The Employee Assistance Program is available to all staff members. It allows for three sessions with a health professional.

## Professional Development

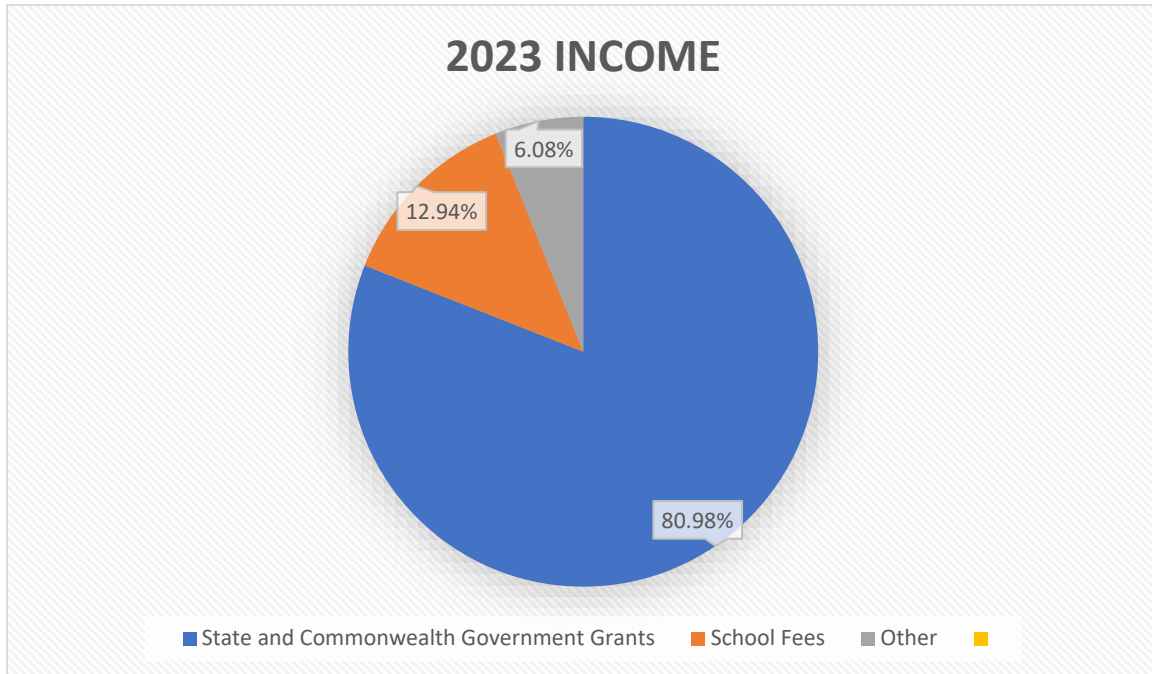
All registered teachers at Berengarra School are required to engage in at least 20 hours of professional development (PD) activities each year in order to renew their registration. All staff participated in staff meetings and daily briefings which frequently contain areas related to professional development. Staff also have access to the PD offered by ISV and other professional development organisations.

In 2023, staff attended seminars on school development, such as first aid, CPR, anaphylaxis, asthma, child safety, emergency training, mandatory reporting, building positive learning communities, lesson planning, structure and evaluation. All staff attended onsite PD days and online seminars throughout the year as well as an all staff conference.

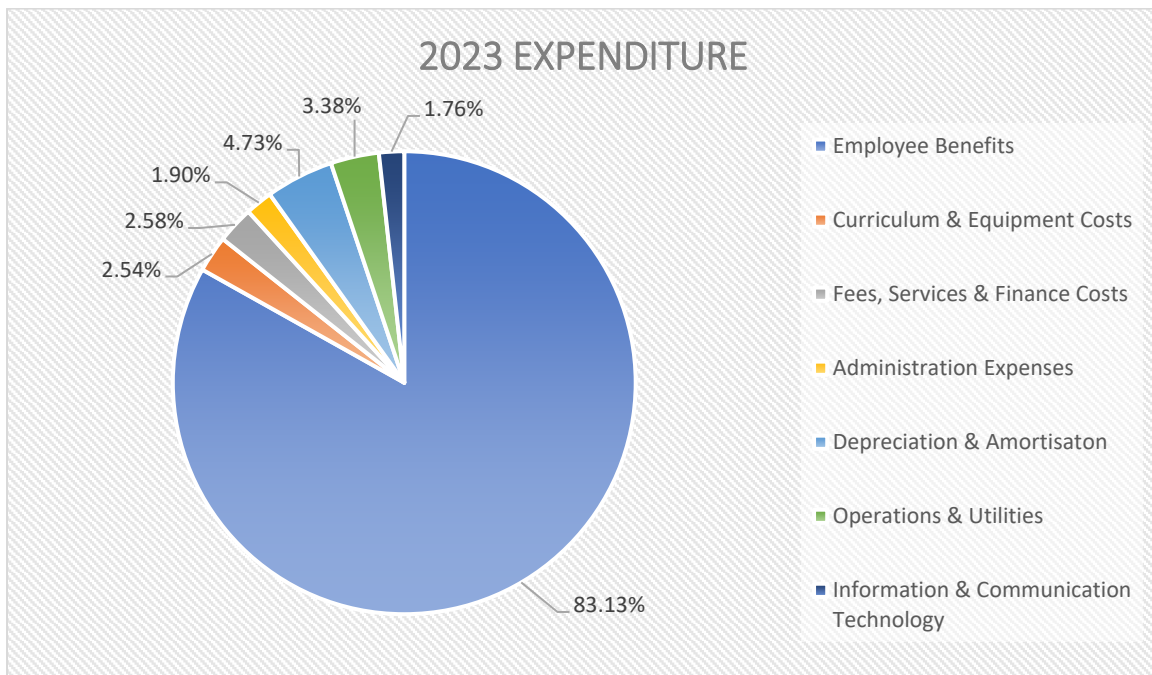
The total amount spent on Professional Development in 2023 was \$25,880.

## Financial Report – Income

All school expenses and commitment of funds have been allocated to support educational outcomes and operational needs.



## Financial Report – Expenditure



### Capital Works – Major Items

Capital Works 2023	\$
Grounds	12,989
Furniture & Equipment	5,560
Works In Progress (WIP)	22,530
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>41,079</b>

Berengarra School welcomes enquiries and feedback on this report via email:  
[info@berengarra.com.au](mailto:info@berengarra.com.au)