



School Review Report 2019–2023 Cycle



Alphington Primary School 3599

North Western Victoria Region

Validation Day: 13 June, 2019

Fieldwork Day: 18 July, 2019

Final Panel Day: 30 July, 2019

Alphington Primary School strives for personal growth and academic achievement. It aims to promote curiosity and to nurture the development of confidence and resilience. The school program encourages children to learn independently and collaboratively, to be valued and value others and to take pride and pleasure in participation and achievement.

1.1 SCHOOL CONTEXT

Location and history	Alphington Primary School (Alphington PS) is located in the City of Darebin/Yarra in the inner north–eastern suburbs of Melbourne approximately nine kilometres from the Melbourne Central Business District. The school was founded in 1908.
School facilities	The school facilities are made up of a mix of older and newer buildings which include a number of discrete classrooms and flexible learning spaces, two library/resource centres, a multi–purpose room and art room. The grounds include both active and passive recreational spaces with two artificial turf–playing areas and two flexible ball–sport courts.
Enrolments	Over the past four years, enrolments have remained stable being 429 in 2016 to be currently around 428.
SFO and SFOE	The Student Family Occupation (SFO) index was 0.1069 and the Student Family Occupation Education (SFOE) index was 0.0815 in 2018.
Staff profile	The staffing profile of Alphington PS is made up of 31.9 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) teachers, including a Principal and Assistant Principal and 4.8 FTE Education Support (ES) staff.
Curriculum	The school provides a curriculum that is based on the Victorian Curriculum learning areas and capabilities and includes specialist programs in Visual Art, Physical Education, Performing Art and Languages other than English (LOTE—Mandarin/Italian).
Additional information	The school provides an accredited Out of School Hours Care Program. The school established sister school partnerships with two schools—one in China and a second in Far North Queensland (FNQ).

Melbourne Oct-19

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1.2 SCHOOL HIGHLIGHTS

Highlight 1

Title: Building community partnerships	Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO) Priority: Community engagement in learning	Dimension: Parents and Carers as partners
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The Panel found that a key school highlight was:

- That the school introduced a number of events over the review period to strengthen community, parent and carer learning partnerships.
- One example was a family Mathematics night. This provided parents with an overview and examples of how Mathematics was taught at the school with a focus on Mathematical proficiencies. This was followed by an interactive evening where families participated in Mathematics challenges and activities together.
- The Panel heard that the success of these sessions were used as a model for collaborating with parents to enhance understandings around other curriculum areas, including Writing. A Writing information session was provided which set out the school's approach to the teaching of Writing and then this was followed by a session where parents and students engaged in interactive activities where they were able to write together.
- Both parent and student feedback gathered by the Panel through the review process endorsed these approaches as opportunities that were building enhanced learning partnerships between home and school and 'spreading the word' across the community about the school's high quality practices in relation to the teaching of key curriculum such as Mathematics and Writing. Parent feedback indicated that they wanted more of these opportunities to strengthen learning partnerships and community engagement in learning.

Highlight 2

Title: Student voice and leadership	FISO Priority: Positive climate for learning	Dimension: Empowering students and building school pride
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The Panel found that another key school highlight was:

- The increasing opportunities for students to have a say in what they learn and how they learn it.
- Students reported to the Panel that one of the highlights for them was the opportunity to select topics and learning approaches in learning areas such as Inquiry and Philanthropy. They indicated they particularly enjoyed doing the research, raising awareness around issues and taking action. They mentioned a couple of recent topics included running a food drive and the raising awareness for a cause based on their interests.
- The Panel heard there were a number of opportunities for students to be involved in developing their leadership skills such as the annual involvement of the Year 6 Student Leadership team in a young leaders conference and involvement across the year levels in the school's Student Representative Council (SRC). For example the SRC recently led initiatives related to reducing rubbish and the introduction of a program to reduce food wrapping.
- The Panel were informed that there was an increasing focus on students setting their own learning goals in other curriculum areas including Reading and Mathematics. This was confirmed when Panel members interviewed students.
- Based on the feedback from students and teachers, the Panel concluded that these student voice and leadership initiatives were empowering students and enhancing school pride and were contributing to the school's positive climate for learning.

Highlight 3

Title: Partnerships with sister schools in China and FNQ	FISO Priority: Positive climate for learning	Dimension: Health and wellbeing
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The Panel found that a third key school highlight was:

- The partnerships the school established with a sister school in China and in FNQ.

- *The Panel agreed these partnerships were enhancing the curriculum, developing student's understandings related to diversity and citizenship and broadening their empathy and understanding of different cultures.*
- *The sister school partnership in China was established in 2013 and included reciprocal exchange programs across the years since then. Students travelled from Alphington to China and experienced a two-week experience where they stay with families that attend the sister school and were involved in language, learning and cultural experiences that build their empathy and global understandings.*
- *The partnership with the school in FNQ also included a reciprocal program where students at Alphington travelled to the school in FNQ and students from FNQ travelled to Alphington. Year 6 Action Teams at Alphington were responsible for fund raising to sponsor the visit by the FNQ students biennially.*
- *The FNQ school is part of the Cape York Aboriginal Australian Academy and the biennial visits of the Alphington students involves them in visiting the school community, participating in classes and experiencing cultural activities. Students reported that these experiences developed deeper knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island cultures.*
- *The Panel concluded based on feedback from students, staff and parents that these partnerships were embedding a range of understandings, skills and values that were contributing to student engagement and wellbeing through the broadening of students' perspectives, including indigenous perspectives, and the forming of more informed and empathetic world minded citizens.*

1.3 SUMMARY OF KEY REVIEW FINDINGS

Performance against the School Strategic Plan (SSP) goals

SSP Goal 1:

The 2016–19 SSP for Alphington PS set a goal to engage and challenge all students in deep and purposeful learning to reach their potential in literacy and numeracy outcomes. The Panel found that the school partially met this goal, with two targets met and three targets not met.

SSP Goal 2:

The second goal was to strengthen the connection of students with their learning within the school and broader school community. The Panel found the school had not met this goal, with two targets not achieved.

SSP Goal 3:

The third goal was to refine the student-centred stimulating learning environment that engages, motivates and connects students with their learning. The Panel found that the school partially met this goal, with one target partially met and two targets not met.

Findings against the Terms of Reference (ToR) Focus Questions

ToR Focus Question 1: To what extent are teachers and teams using multiple sources of data about student learning to inform and improve teaching to meet a range of learning needs, including the learning needs of both girls and boys and high achieving students?

The Panel concluded that teachers and teams had begun to use multiple sources of data, and that progress was being made in the use of evidence-based teaching and learning approaches, particularly through the Professional Learning Community (PLC) approach. They found there was a focus on explicit teaching to meet a range of student learning needs, but that opportunities to teach to every students' point of need were not consistently embedded.

ToR Focus Question 2: To what extent have teachers and teams established consistent and accountable approaches to curriculum planning, instructional practices and assessment across the school to ensure learning is maximised for every student and all cohorts?

The Panel agreed that teachers and teams were working to establish consistent and accountable approaches to curriculum planning, instructional practices and assessment across the school, particularly through the PLC approach. They found that the school was working on developing whole school agreements for the teaching of Reading, Writing and Numeracy but that these agreements were at different stages of development and/or not yet embedded across the whole school.

ToR Focus Question 3: To what extent has student voice and learner agency been activated to empower students and raise their levels of engagement in learning and school?

The Panel found that the school had a range of student leadership and voice opportunities in place which were empowering students and raising their levels of engagement and pride in school. They agreed that there were some avenues for students to follow their interests within the curriculum. The Panel concluded though that there were fewer opportunities for students to be learner agents, to consistently set learning goals and to provide feedback on the impact of teaching and learning.

1.4 SUMMARY OF KEY DIRECTIONS FOR THE NEXT SSP

The School Review Panel recommends the following key directions for the next SSP:

- Literacy and numeracy
- Data Literacy
- Teaching to the point of need
- Whole school instructional models
- High impact teaching strategies
- Professional learning communities
- Student voice and agency
- A whole school wellbeing plan
- Learning partnerships