

**Fitzroy High School
8742**

**Annual Report to the
School Community
2006**



School Overview

Fitzroy High School is continuing to grow consistent with projections, The school increased its student population by 30% to 307 students during 2006. We were able to plan effectively for the increase. The school increased the number of teams to four (adding the Jet team at Year 9) and increased total staff numbers from 33 to 45.

In 2006 we ran our first VCE subjects with all of our Year 10 students completing at least one unit of VCE. We also had students undertake VET (Vocational Education and Training) subjects for the first time where they completed all of the outcomes. This was the highest completion rate of outcomes of any school in the state.

Fitzroy High School maintains its innovative charter and continues to be a centre for professional development within education sector – over 150 visits from teachers, academics and education sector administrators.

The school is primarily focussed on “individualized” learning outcomes for its students and developing their future capacity as autonomous learners. As this is the third year of the school's operation, the data available is year-on-year rather than trend. This data tells us that we have proof that we can innovate with a focus on improved educational outcomes. However, we want to move forward and continue this to the post compulsory years. The options and approaches we seek to put in place are not available at current neighbouring schools.

Our Strategic Plan identifies the following as our school goals:

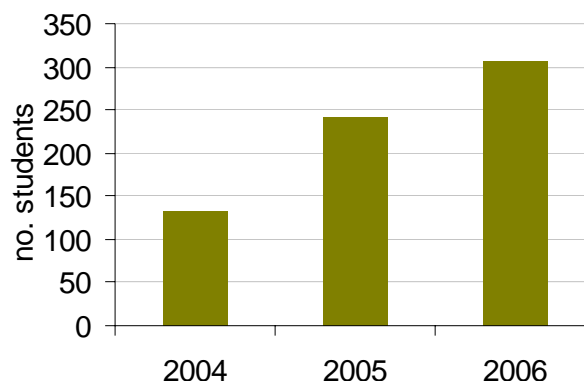
- Improve student attainment in literacy and numeracy
The establishment of strong core skills in this area will lead to high participation and performance at post compulsory level.
- Develop an environment with strong relationships where students can thrive
An increasing emphasis on effective feedback to students and the development of a stronger 'learning to learn' capacity in the students will lead to a high level of engagement.
- Develop appropriate post-compulsory provision for all students
100% of Year 8 students in 2005 to be enrolled in Year 11 or equivalent

The parent opinion survey displayed a continued high level of satisfaction with the school.

During the year the school continued its system of internal 'open' days where current parents could visit and see actual classes in the teams in operation. Exhibitions displaying the breadth and quality of student work for parents were held across all teams. Teams continued the practice of emailing newsletters to parents which detailed activities, work set and work due.

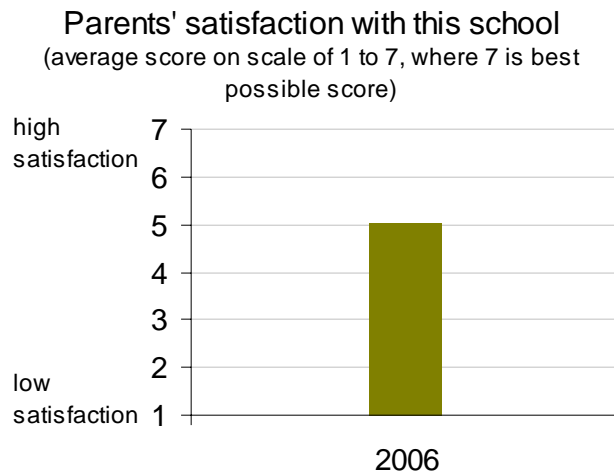
Student enrolments

Total students enrolled in school



Parent Satisfaction

The average score for parent satisfaction with this school is 5.05 on a scale from 1 to 7, where 7 is the best possible score.



• Teacher Satisfaction

The average score for teacher satisfaction (morale) at this school was 3.7 on a scale from 1 to 5 where 5 is the best possible score.

• Teacher Absence

The average number of days absent per teacher was 8.1 days.

• Teacher Retention

Of the 23 teaching staff at Fitzroy High School at June 2005 including those on leave without pay), 221 or 96% were still at the school at June 2006. This figure across all Government schools was 87%.

• Teacher participation in professional learning

All teaching staff have participated in professional learning throughout the year, such as such as the Teacher Professional Leave program, Australian Government Quality Teacher program and the Induction / Mentoring for Beginning program for teachers."

The school has a strong system of professional support for inducting new staff. This includes the provision of mentors and a robust performance and development culture. Staff work together in their teams to develop their professional skills and provide feedback to each other on their teaching and the learning taking place.

• Teacher Qualifications

All teachers in Victorian Government schools are registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching. The requirements for registration with the Victorian Institute of Teaching can be found at; http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/content.asp?Document_ID=241.

Principal's Report

The school has a specific mandate to explore and develop:

- educational innovation - with a particular emphasis upon the "middle years"
- a teacher education program and facility
- alternative and innovative education in the community through partnerships with the local community,
- educational providers and other agencies

Significant Activities planned for 2006

In our 2005 annual report we identified the following as achievement milestones in 2006. I am pleased to report that all were met.

- the most significant activity planned for 2006 is the preparations to be made for the development of the educational and building for our Year 11 & 12 program to start in 2007
- Our first VCE and VET classes run at Year 10
- maintenance of our student computer ratio at better than 1:2
- the development of the courtyard as a reflective learning area
- the opening of the library on a full time basis
- expansion of our music and performing arts programs

There were many highlights provided by students including:

- the school cabaret performed in the round in our gym
- the numerous exhibitions of student work including public events such as the 'night of the notables' and presentation of , efolios of student work including reflective thoughts on their learning and interactive displays
- the continued development of the instrumental music program with over one third of the schools students involved in lessons
- the high participation rate in sport and physical activities and our success in having competitive teams advance to zone finals and our first individual All High champion since the school re-opened
- the community service program
- the acceptance of a second group of six students into the alpine School, a residential leadership program run over term 2 at Mount Hotham
- the participation of students in the Premier's Reading challenge
- participation in the WestPac maths challenge
- Duke of Edinburgh
- the development of the garden courtyard in a joint student/teacher/parent/community effort
- the art camp organised by students from the art club
- the 'green' camp organised by students from the environmental group
- the surf camp in December
- the involvement of a significant number of girls in the 'Girls in IT' project with Swinburne University

Other highlights for the year included:

- our links in research projects with R.M.I.T
- the provision of professional learning programs for educators from around the state in our teacher development unit
- the development of our building plans for the senior levels
- continued development of the personal learning plans

During the course of the year we again received over 150 visits from principals, teachers and educational experts to look at the way the school operated. These included visitors from Victoria, interstate and overseas.

These are only some of the many highlights of the year. We remain committed to the original goals of the school and look forward to further developments in the coming year.

Tim Fitzgerald

School Council President's Report

Fitzroy High School Council has evolved a distinct style and procedure of governance over the initial 3 years of the School's operation.

Council now has a mature and accountable structure which enables governance to be active and participatory.

All elected parent councillors hold a portfolio. There are 5 additional roles to the mandatory President, Vice-President and Treasurer.

These are currently: Education, Communications, Built & Natural Environment, Canteen and Events & Fundraising.

The Councillor holding each portfolio chairs a subcommittee, assisted by a convenor who is a staff elected councillor.

The Treasurer chairs the Finance subcommittee.

All these subcommittees are open to membership and participation from the entire school community.

Each subcommittee meets monthly, in phase with full council meetings, to plan, ratify and execute tasks and projects.

Each subcommittee reports to and receives directions from the full School Council.

This structure integrates the concerns and deliberations at Council level with the planning and conduct of the School's activities in a very practical and immediate way.

Prospective Councillors have a very clear idea of what is required of members.

The School Community have an open, accessible and practical process available to introduce concerns and ideas into the governance of the School.

Jeff Richardson

Student Progress & Achievements

Student Learning Student Learning

Our students' achievement in learning is assessed on testing and data collected by the school, which forms the basis of teacher judgement, student participation in external testing such as the Achievement Improvement Monitor (AIM) and set against state standards and national benchmarks as well as against "like schools." The achievement of goals set in personal learning plans are a key feature of the approach at Fitzroy High School.

We have a clearly defined strategy for improving performance across the school characterised by our individualised approach to teaching and learning. The personalisation of the curriculum and engagement of students in authentic learning were our key improvement strategies. We improved our understanding of individual students through a program of focused assessment including teacher observation and diagnostic testing. The continued development of distinct teams of children and staff assisted in this.

Higher levels of achievement in English and Maths at each year are key goals in the school's strategic plan. Over the last three years we have gathered data that tells us that students are doing well in Reading and mathematics.

The different ways that we measure and calibrate performance showed that, based on teacher judgements in 2005, 75% of our Year 8 children were operating at or above the expected level in Reading and 62% in mathematics. In 2006 the AIM data showed that in Year 9 80% of these students were operating at or above the expected level in Reading and 60% in mathematics, a very close correlation with the previous year's teacher judgements. Our target is that we will have a significant improvement in the number of students at or above the expected standard by the end of Year 10 as measured against where they were at the end of Year 8.

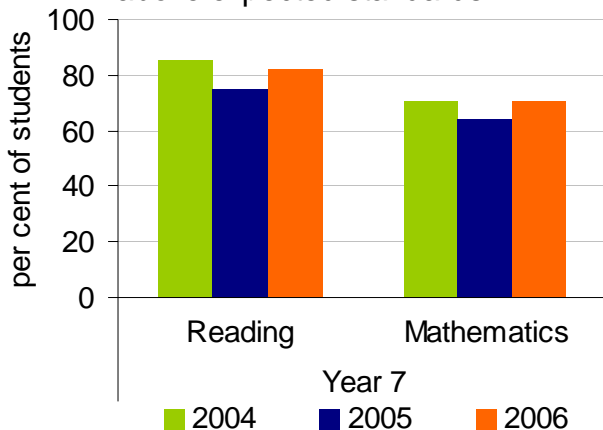
In 2006 70% of our Year 8 children were operating at or above the expected level in Reading and Writing and 60% in Mathematics. No comparison with like schools is yet available. In previous years this would have placed us in the top 10% in Reading and top 25% in Mathematics of schools that have a similar student profile to us. This profile is determined by the socio-economic and language background of students. We are currently within what is known as like School Group 5. Other schools that are in this group include Princes Hill, Bentleigh, Brighton, Buckley Park, Bundoora and Forest Hill Secondary Colleges.

The bar graph below indicates student performance in Reading and Mathematics as defined by the Achievement Improvement Monitor-A.I.M. This is a snapshot of student performance that occurs midway through Year 7 and slightly earlier in Year 9. The school consistently sits in the top 10% of schools in its group in Reading and Mathematics in both year levels. It is also consistently above the state average.

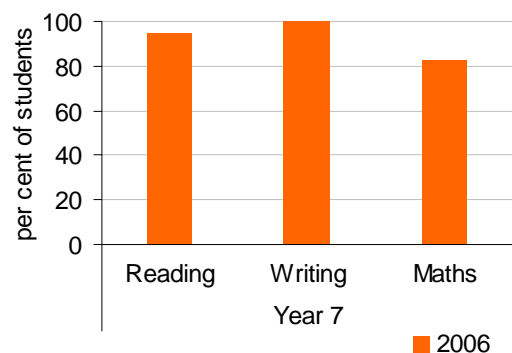
The bar graph below indicates student performance in Reading and Mathematics as defined by the A.I.M. against National Benchmarks. It should be noted that this measures different groups of students- those in Year 7 during 2004 are the green column, the blue column 2005 and the orange column those in 2006.

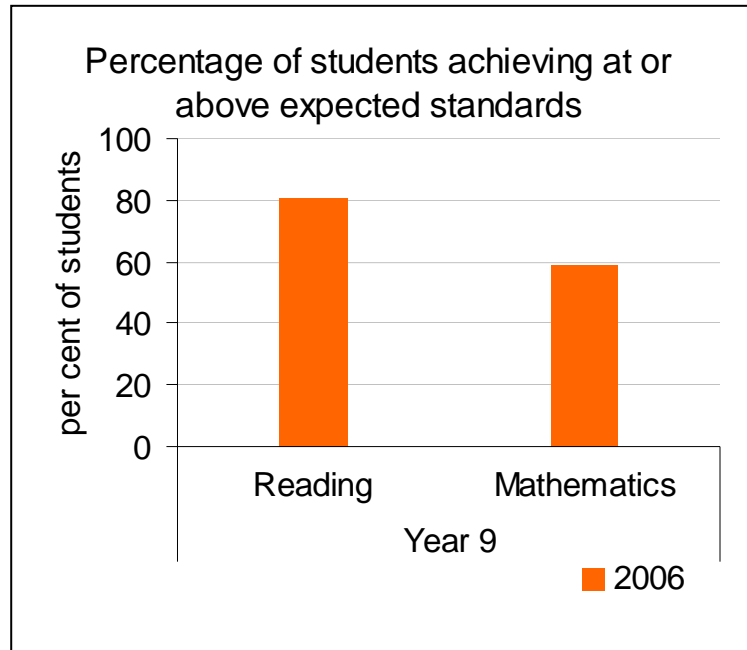
In 2006 100% of Year 7 students achieved the national benchmark in Writing, over 90% in Reading and 80% in Mathematics. Year 9 students participated in the AIM from 2006; however their achievement against the National Benchmarks has not been established.

Percentage of students achieving at or above expected standards



Percentage of students achieving at or above National Benchmarks





We refined our system of Personal Learning Time and Personal Learning Plans. This meant that more students were able to engage in learning experiences directly related to their individual needs. and We put in place a school wide system of formal student self evaluation and reflection designed to increase their independent learning skills.

Vocational Education and Training

In 2006 we had our first group of students complete the first year of a VET (Vocational Education and Training) program. It was pleasing to note that no school in the state had a higher satisfactory completion rate for the units of competency undertaken. We will track this over the next few years as this might be an indicator of the success of our personalised approach to schooling.

Student Pathways and Transitions

In 2006 the school focussed on planning for delivery of VCE. A great deal of work was done during the year on the development of our senior secondary program and the following educational strategies were put in place

This planning meant that students enrolled in 18 different VCE units and 10 different Vocational Education and Training programs at the end of the year. Year 12 will commence in 2008. Most units are being completed at the school but the school has signed a memorandum of understanding with Collingwood College for the provision of VCE programs and supports distance education with tutoring where required.

Flexibility

Staff time: the senior program will run between 8:30 and 4:30 each day with facilities open until 8:00 till 8:00 p.m. each day. As staff will be working in teams, time will be provided for them to plan together.

Community resources: links with RMIT and the University of Melbourne will provide access to some of their resources. It is not envisaged that we would place all required facilities on site but would continue to access community resources through arrangements such as the inner Melbourne Vet cluster and Fitzroy's continued and expanded agreement with Yarra Council for the use of the facilities in the Edinburgh Gardens for sporting and recreational purposes.

Student time: senior students would be part of a flexible timetable that would operate from 8:30 till 4:30. Resources such as learning centres would be open till 8:00 p.m. but much of the content would be held and be accessible from Virtual Learning Environments.

Strategic partners: links have already been made with RMIT, the University of Melbourne, the Australian Children's Television Foundation and various local architects and designers.

Year 13: it is proposed that a Year 13 program be developed. It is expected that this will be in the Mathematics study area.

Personalised learning

Tutorials: each student would be placed in a tutorial with the tutorial teacher working with the student to meet the targets in their personal learning plan. These tutorials would be formed through the aligning of students and teachers with a similar focus (eg: students in the industrial design area).

Personal Learning Plans: All students at Years 7-10 at Fitzroy already have these and this would continue for all students at Years 10-12.

Autonomous learning: the allocation of resources would recognise that much of the content can be contained within Virtual Learning Environments. Students would have access to these 24/7 and staff would focus on ensuring student understanding of the core elements of each study area and extending this understanding.

ICT: The student computer ratio at Fitzroy currently stands at 1:1.75 and it has a robust ICT infrastructure as well as a wireless network accessible in all areas of the school. This would need to be continued with much of the data available to students and parents electronically.

Cross curriculum

Major research project: the atomisation of the curriculum at senior levels often leads to students being expert in subject-specific areas but unable to make learning links across subjects. A major research project, run through the tutorial system with assessment carried across subjects at Units 1&2, would enable these links to be made.

Personal learning plans: The plans enable links to be made across the curriculum and can focus on 'learning to learn' issues and the skills required to succeed at the senior level.

Programs

VCE VET VCAL Design Timetables

The proposal enables the school to both provide a broader curriculum than is otherwise possible, and over pathways in areas not currently available to inner city students. All of the programs to be run have accreditation with the VCAA and VQA. It is the enhanced pedagogical and organisational approach that we will take to them that will transform learning. Timetables will be aligned and the focus on design will enable a differentiation from, and complement, offerings at other inner city schools.

Data Management

ICT: As well as Virtual Learning Environments, ICT will be used to track students, provide feedback and underpin our personal/autonomous learning systems.

A leading teacher from Fitzroy received teacher professional leave in 2006 to look expressly at data management in the post compulsory area.

Achievement: Individualised tracking of student achievement across a range of measures (including attendance, time on task, performance against standards, etc) will be put in place through a digital system.

Potential/predicted: Fitzroy is currently putting in place a system where teachers assess both the potential of a student and a prediction of what standard they will achieve. The difference (if any) between the two is determined, and plans put in place to bridge this gap. This involves both teachers and students planning for improvement. This is closely linked to the successful operation of a performance and development culture and students being involved in 'learning to learn'.

Advice & Support

Tutorials: As mentioned above, tutorials will be used to drive and support student learning and engagement.

Mentors: The schools are identifying mentors within the community, particularly those with professional backgrounds with a willingness to work with the schools. These mentors could be for individuals (Fitzroy High has entered an arrangement with the Education Faculty at The University of Melbourne where Fitzroy students will be mentored by graduate students in both how to approach the latter years of schooling and deal with the first years of tertiary study) or focused on small groups in the schools where workshops can be run and assistance given with specific projects.

Careers advice: As each student has a personal learning plan the role of the careers counsellor becomes entwined with their academic and pathway goals. The schools employed an experienced careers counsellors who will work closely with tutorial teachers to ensure an effective program is established.

Secure and safe environment: There is a need for students to feel supported as they are challenged to perform in the post compulsory years. A system of personalised learning, supported by tutorials and counsellors, will contribute to the development of increased resilience.

Learning to Learn: The culture of the school will be directed towards providing students with the skills to become independent, self monitoring learners.

Student Engagement and Wellbeing

The third year of operation was seen as an opportunity to improve our policies and practices

Things we have done:

Students

-
- We had six students at the Alpine School in Term Two
- We expanded our instrumental music program
- We ran separate camps at all year levels with students going to Lady Northcote at Rowsley, the YMCA camp at Phillip island for a surf camp, the Bogong Outdoor Education Camp and the Anglesea YMCA Camp
- Students achievements were acknowledged at regular whole school assemblies
- Exhibitions were held for families at the end of units of work where students presented their finished work

Staff

- We employed a teacher to co-ordinate the Program for Students with Disabilities
- We appointed a careers teacher from May to work with senior students and to develop a strategic plan for the school in the careers and advice area
- We were able to employ another librarian and open the library for five days per week. This provided students and staff with a dedicated resource space and support staff
- Three staff visited the United Kingdom to analyse school developments
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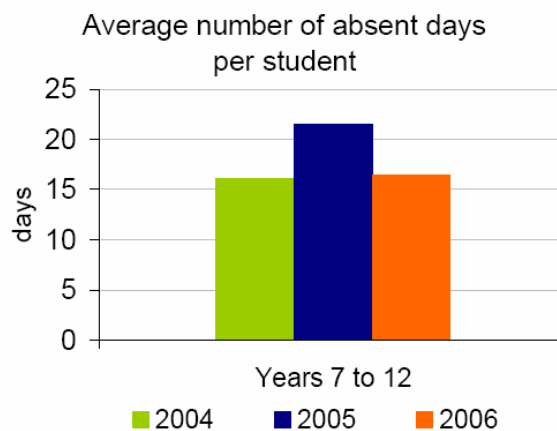
Community

- We undertook a review of our Equal Opportunity policy
- Parents developed the Families at Fitzroy program
- We opened the school facilities to the community thus enabling use by groups including a hospitality school, various basketball clubs, sporting groups, community groups, yoga classes and Life Drawing classes

In our 2005 report we identified the need for us to do two things in regards to attendance:

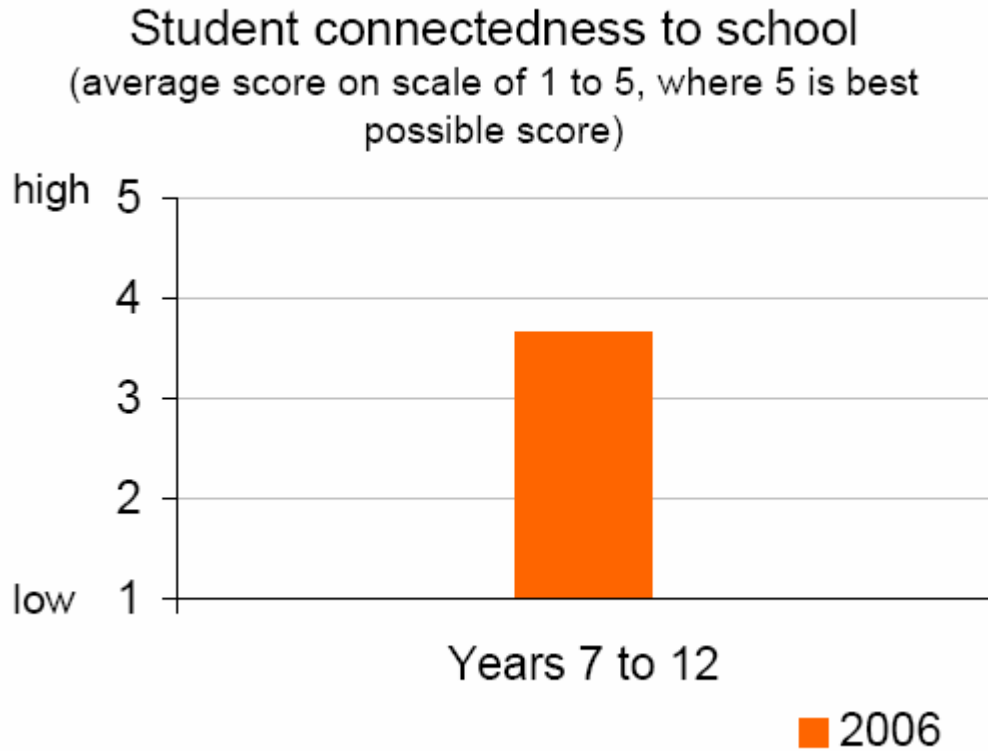
1. Examine the usefulness of an electronic rolls system. This was trialled in the last half of 2006 for full implementation in early 2007.
2. To develop a strategic plan focused on assessment. This has also been done.

The average number of student absences has decreased from 2005.



Students' school connectedness –

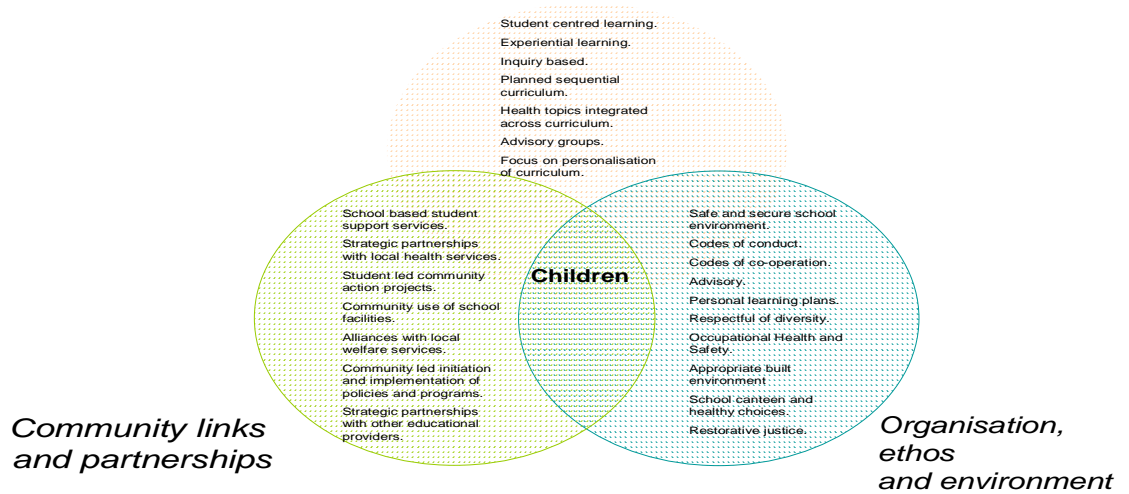
The chart below draws on data from the Student Attitudes to School Survey. Students in Years 5 to Year 12 are asked to what extent they agree with each of five statements (I feel good about being a student at this school, I like school this year, I am happy to be at this school, I feel I belong at this school, I look forward to going to school) on a scale where 1=strongly disagree and 5=strongly agree. The mean score is reported. The survey changed in 2006 and is not comparable to the pre-2006 survey. Pre-2006 data is therefore not shown.



The school scores highly in a large number of measures in this survey.

During 2006 the School adopted a Health Promoting School Policy which provides a framework for integrating three aspects of the schools operation to supporting the health and well being of students. These aspects, curriculum and learning, organization and ethos and community and partnerships and the areas of activity within each are summarized in the diagram below.

Curriculum teaching and learning



Future Directions

After analysis of the available data the school has set itself a number of targets in the 2007 school year.

Our personal learning plans are now much more complete as staff, students and parents become more familiar with their use as an educational planning tool. We have developed a more accurate sense of the data that should be the basis of these. As a consequence we are looking to have AIM, MYAT, TORCH and other diagnostic testing data used by staff to set individual targets for all students in Years 7-10. This will enable us to both set forward looking targets but more effectively measure if they have been met in the core skill areas of literacy and numeracy.

Following from this our aspiration is to have these targets attained by 100% of students. To do this all students will have individual targets in their learning plan. So that the plans become living documents we wish to have multiple forms of feedback from students embedded in all teams. The feedback would consider questions such as Are the plans working? Are we seeing improvement? Are we planning for challenging experiences that will stretch all students? These are the questions that we are seeking to answer.

Though there was a significant decrease in student absence rates in 2006 we wish to see this rate decreased by a further 10% on the 2006 figure.

We also are aiming for a 10% increase in the 'general satisfaction' variable in the 2007 parent opinion survey

Benchmarking of VCE and VET participation and completion rates starts for us this year and will become increasingly important as we seek to measure where our students go and what pathways being at Fitzroy provides us with.

On a technical level the most significant challenge facing us this year is the development and design of our new buildings. Elsewhere in this report we have covered the educational strategies we are putting in place to enable effective learning to take place. In a new approach by the department these educational strategies directly affect the design of the building.

Without this building at Fitzroy High School, it is not possible to achieve the educational outcomes identified. It will support a focused approach to the post compulsory area that builds on the best research about learning. Direct links between the strategies and the new facility include:

1. Flexibility- the design of the building will support flexible work and learning practices. Rather than being constrained by the structure, flexible learning will be enhanced.
2. Personalised learning: The construction of appropriate spaces will support students working in tutorial groups and undertaking aspects of autonomous learning.
3. Cross curriculum: The links that support cross-curricula planning mean that spaces need to be interchangeable and fluid, rather than set as a discrete and distinct subject area.
4. Programs: The school is unable to run any program at post compulsory level without this facility.
5. Data management: The combination of intense data analysis and fluid working spaces and the use of strategic partners means that a robust ICT backbone is required.
6. Advice & Support: Flexible spaces will be required to enable both instruction, tutorials and counselling.
7. Design: The provision of studio spaces will enable the focus on design to occur.
8. Performance and development culture: By having spaces that require interaction between teachers and shared practice we will work towards the de-privatisation of teaching practice at the senior level.

We look forward to meeting these challenges.

Financial Performance

The school has focused on continuing to establish a high quality educational facility. Included in the spending detailed below are:

- The salaries of instrumental music staff
- Teachers employed to cover other teachers undertaking significant professional learning
- The purchase of significant resources within the classroom
- The establishment of our courtyard garden
- Furniture and equipment needed for our growing school population
- The provision of computers to keep our student to computer ratio below 1:2
- The provision of internet data services to support learning

All of these contribute to us meeting our strategic goals.

Financial Performance for the year ending 31st December, 2006	
Revenue	2006 Actual
DE&T Grants	502,439
Commonwealth Government Grants	20,288
State Government Grants	372
Other	70,782
Locally Raised Funds	365,482
Total Operating Revenue	959,363
Expenditure	
Salaries and Allowances	179,249
Bank Charges	1,156
Consumables	132,074
Books and Publications	2,383
Communication Costs	28,083
Furniture and Equipment	74,087
Utilities	27,052
Property Services	172,662
Travel and Subsistence	577
Motor Vehicle Expenses	879
Administration	12,436
Health and Personal Development	609
Professional Development	81,866
Trading and Fundraising	37,840
Support/Service	11,151
Miscellaneous	116,896
Total Operating Expenditure	878,998
Net Operating Surplus/- Deficit	80,365
Capital Expenditure (Cases 21 Finance Only)	
Please note that the above amounts do not include any credit revenue or expenditure allocated or spent by the school through its Student Resource Package	

Financial Position as at 31st December, 2006	
Funds Available	2006 Actual
High Yield Investment Account	12,926.72
Official Account	38,373.17
Other Bank Accounts(listed individually)	
<i>Building Fund</i>	2,426.75
<i>Library Fund</i>	2,510.00
<i>(insert)</i>	
Total Funds Available	56,236.64
Financial Commitments	2006 Actual
Accounts Payable Control	32,548.99
Camps/Excursions	4,042.05
Building/Grounds including SMS	18,000
Special Programs inc Student Services	0
Region /Clusters Funds	0
Professional Development	1,645.60
Other (please list)	0
School Operating Reserve	0
Total Financial Commitments	56,236.64

School Contact Information

Address:	Falconer St, North Fitzroy 3068
Principal:	Tim Fitzgerald
School Council President:	Jeff Richardson
Telephone:	9488 1900
Email:	info@fitzroyhs.vic.edu.au
Web site:	www.fitzroyhs.vic.edu.au

This report contains summary data extracted from the School Level Report. If you would like to access the School Level Report, please contact Pauline Rice, Assistant Principal.