School Context

At Maroona Primary School we actively strive to develop a safe, caring and inclusive learning environment where mutual respect and the pursuit of personal excellence form the basis for life-long learning and future success. We believe that all students can learn and benefit from actively engaging in a worthwhile and challenging curriculum. We want to create life long learners, not only in our students but staff and greater community. Our purpose as educators at Maroona Primary school is to develop our pedagogical knowledge, increase consistency of practice for the core priorities of Literacy & Numeracy, and to refine teacher practice to understand and use data as evidence to personalise student learning.  We utilise the Resilience Project to align with the school values to embed a common language for staff and students.  Maroona Primary School is situated 18 kilometres south of Ararat. It has a population of 30 students and three teaching staff. We have full time teachers in our junior (Prep to Year three) and senior classrooms (Year Four to Year 6).

Learning

Our aim at Maroona is for our Literacy block to be an uninterrupted time, where the focus remains on students reading and writing for the majority of the two hours. Student achievement is monitored using the recommended whole school strategies and assessment, and instruction is based at student’s point of need. The focus of lessons is clearly displayed and students understand what they need to do to be successful. We aim to provide highly engaging lessons, where students are inspired to read and write by understanding the purpose of their learning in real life situations. We base our Writing on the Anne Angelopoulos ‘Writing Model’. The program empowers students to become great writers by providing high-quality modelling within a structured framework. Right from Foundation, teachers model high quality writing and encourage students to experiment with new techniques, explore new vocabulary and a range of figurative language. Teachers model the behaviours of great writers and set high expectations for students, resulting in work of an exceptional standard.  At Maroona Primary School we have developed a whole school pedagogy in Numeracy that caters for the individual needs of our students. Our daily one-hour Numeracy block has ensured that targeted, focused teaching occurs at student point of need, determined by student data. Our teachers are supported through whole school professional development to ensure a consistent approach across the school and are proud of the results the students have achieved in Numeracy. We strive for all students to meet their full potential in Numeracy and ensure that students are supported through the use of engaging, focused lessons including the use of open-ended tasks.

Wellbeing

Welfare and engagement are one of the core responsibilities of the school principal as well as working in conjunction will all school staff to improve and monitor our student wellbeing. The school continued to take part in the Resilience Project in 2022. The Resilience Project curriculum was taught weekly to all students. The pillars of this program (gratitude, mindfulness and empathy) aligned with our school values, which resonated with students. With new staff entering the school in 2023, they will be given the necessary professional development to ensure that the key messages are being relayed to the students going forward. Student responses to all 4 sections in the learner characteristics and disposition domain (attitudes to attendance, motivation and interest, self-regulation and goal setting, and sense of confidence) were in the 80th - 100th percentile and were similar to previous years.

Engagement

Welfare and engagement were one of the core responsibilities of the school principal. Student attendance and wellbeing were closely monitored across the school.  A number of families choose to take holidays during January and February to fit in with the agricultural cycles which predominate within our parent community.  Where extended student absences occur due to family holidays, learning materials are taken by the children to allow them to continue learning while they are away from school. All staff at Maroona were able to find creative ways to engage students through the use of technology and interactive learning activities. Overall, attendance to school remains consistently high, student absence at Maroona is better when compared to similar schools and schools across the state.

Other highlights from the year

2022 saw our first entry into the Energy Breakthrough Victoria competition.  This was a fantastic opportunity for our students to take part in a significant community event, competing against other schools from across the state.  The children worked hard on their pre-race presentation, and spent many weeks before the event building their knowledge of sustainable energy and the impact that energy generation and transport can have on our environment.  There was also fantastic support from parents, who travelled to the event to support our students.  Despite not being able to camp over at Maryborough for the duration of the event, it was a wonderful learning and team-building experience for all involved.



Financial performance

In 2022 the school completed the year with a staffing surplus of just under $85,000. Our student enrolment decreased by only two students despite the departure of our large Grade 6 group, which meant that the student resource package remained similar to previous years. In addition to our state government allocation through the student resource package, the school received government provided grants for additional cleaning, professional development funding of $5500 after employing a new teacher through the teacher funding initiative, the school will receive the same professional development funding again in 2023.  The parents contributed approximately $17,000 through local fundraising at the Camp Draft event and Tatyoon Football Club canteen.