



*Gilson  
College*

# Annual Report

Mernda Campus 2023





# Table of Contents

<b>Table of Contents</b>	<b>2</b>
Acknowledgement of Country	2
<b>School Overview</b>	<b>3</b>
Mission Statement	3
Purpose Statement	3
Values	3
Introduction	3
Child Safety	3
<b>2023 Fast Facts</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>A Message from the Principal</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Professional Engagement</b>	<b>6</b>
Human Resources	6
Teaching Staff Qualifications	6
Professional Learning	6
<b>Student Learning</b>	<b>8</b>
Curriculum	8
Student Attendance	8
National Benchmarks	9
VCE Results	11
<b>A Thriving Community</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>School Finances</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Future Direction</b>	<b>14</b>
Quality Practice	14
Building Community	14
Investing in our Future	14

## Acknowledgement of Country

Gilson College acknowledges the Wurundjeri People of the Kulin Nation as the land's traditional custodians. We recognise that by learning from the past, we can best care for each other in the future. We are committed to working as Jesus did to achieve a legacy of reconciliation, justice and hope for all Australians.



# School Overview

## Mission Statement

Nurture for today. Learning for tomorrow. Character for life.

## Purpose Statement

Our purpose is, through excellence in education, to develop people of integrity and Christian character.

## Values

At Gilson College all staff and students strive to be:

- Respectful
- Responsible
- Resilient
- A learner

## Introduction

The Mernda campus of Gilson College is a Foundation to Year 12, co-educational school with an open enrolment policy which accommodates students from a diverse range of social, cultural, religious and academic backgrounds.

The holistic development of students within a Christian worldview centres around the college's core values of respect, responsibility, resilience and a learner mindset. These values are integral to all elements of college life and are taught explicitly to students through our Positive Behaviour for Learning framework.

Our talented Christian teachers are proud to support students as they pursue excellence, both academically and across a diverse range of co-curricular opportunities available at the college as they realise their God-given potential.

## Child Safety

Gilson College is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. The Mernda campus has satisfactorily met the requirements of the Child Safe Standards and is up to date with all new minimum VRQA requirements. All staff and volunteers undergo a recruitment and induction process as outlined in the Duty of Care, Child Safety Protection and Child Safe Code of Conduct policies. These policies are available for viewing on the college website.



# 2023 Fast Facts

Education Level:	Foundation - Year 12
Type:	Co-educational
Affiliation:	Seventh-day Adventist Church
Total enrolments:	281
Average class size:	22
Teaching staff:	25
Tuition Fees Range:	\$6,480 - \$9,416 per year
Tuition Levy:	\$250 per year

## School Contacts

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Phone:	03 9717 7300
Email:	admin.m@gilson.vic.edu.au
Web:	mernda.gilson.vic.edu.au
VCAA No:	15600
Principal/s:	Ms Kristin Hankins <i>BEd, MEd</i>



# A Message from the Principal

2023 has been a year of growth and development for our school community. Student enrolment numbers are the highest that we have seen in this history of our campus, as parents seek a strong, values-centred learning environment and opportunities for their children to thrive. We have also achieved a significant step in our school journey - the successful re-registration of our college as a stand alone school within the Seventh-day Adventist School system. From January 1, 2024, we will be known as Mernda Hills Christian College!

This re-registration process has been part of the strategic planning for our school for some time. It gives us a new name and logo, but all the great things about our school stay the same - same Christ-centred, values focused environment, same community feel, same great teachers and support staff, same great opportunities for lifelong student success. We are excited about this next step in our journey and look forward to sharing it with you.

The end of 2023 brings with it a time of reflection and celebration for our students - another year of school complete! Our graduating cohort deserve great credit for their fortitude and resilience, and for working so collaboratively with each other and their teachers to reach the end of their schooling journey.

As we acknowledge the achievements of our students this year, I want to pay particular tribute to our staff, who have worked hard to support our students and add value to our community this year. Our student success is a reflection of their professionalism, dedication and care. I also want to honour our parents and wider school community, who have formed a strong partnership with the College and its staff. Your support of the College tells our students that their learning and development is something that is really important!

It is clear that God is leading our school and I look forward to a new year and the next step of our journey together with students, staff, parents and our wider community.

Kristin Hankins  
Principal



# Professional Engagement

## Human Resources

Gilson College is a learning community in which staff work together to fulfil our mission - to reveal Jesus as we nurture students, help them learn, and support their character development. Our total teaching staff Full Time Equivalent (FTE) in 2023 was 24.7 with a total headcount of 28.

Staff retention at Gilson College (Mernda Campus) is high, with few staffing changes from year to year. The percentage retention rate from 2023 to 2024 was 89%.

## Teaching Staff Qualifications

All teaching staff at Gilson College are qualified and registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) in accordance with government regulations. Many have additional qualifications and expertise to provide excellence in education. The following table outlines the qualifications of teaching staff in 2023:

Qualification	Percentage of Teaching Staff
Bachelor of Education or Bachelor of Teaching	84%
Master of Education	24%
Master of Teaching	4%
Additional supporting degree	24%
Additional supporting diploma	12%

## Professional Learning

All staff at Gilson College demonstrate our value of being a learner, and the college places a high value on professional learning to ensure that we provide research-based best practice for our students and families.

Staff participated in both free and paid professional development opportunities to further their knowledge and skills. This included college-wide professional learning to continue to guide the strategic direction and development of the college, and smaller opportunities targeted the needs of specific groups or individuals within the staff team. In 2023 the total expenditure on learning for staff was \$26,100.

Staff participate in annual First Aid training including CPR, asthma and anaphylaxis training, Mandatory Reporting, OHS, Child Safe and Learning Support training. OHS training for 2023 occurred within the areas of Managing Hazardous Manual Tasks, Slips, Trips and Falls as well as Work Related Stress. Further training in the areas of digital technologies, pedagogy, wellbeing, child safety and meeting the needs of students with disabilities was included at regular intervals throughout the year.



In 2023 we continued our liaison with Insight SRC in delivering the Building Cultural Capacity initiative. This shift in approach to school improvement continues to further enhance the way that staff lead changes and facilitate excellence in all aspects of school life.

Other professional development activities included:

- Student-Driven Differentiation program
- Managing Student Disability program
- Strategic Planning Project
- Peer Support workshop
- Gender Identity program
- Culture of Coaching program
- ASA Leadership Conference
- Supporting Anxious Students program
- Trauma Informed Practice program
- Boosting Student Education in the Language Classroom program
- Enrolment workshop
- Building Cultural Capacity program
- Working With Students With Individual Needs program
- NCCD Moderation program

\*Note that not all staff were trained in all of the programs mentioned above.



# Student Learning

## Curriculum

Gilson College bases the delivery of curriculum on the Australian Curriculum for Foundation - Year 10. The teaching of Biblical Studies through Encounter is also mandatory for students from Foundation - Year 10. During Years 11 and 12, students participate in the Victorian Certificate of Education course.

Primary School	Years 7-8
Compulsory Subjects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Biblical Studies</li> <li>• English</li> <li>• Mathematics</li> <li>• Science</li> <li>• HASS</li> <li>• Health &amp; Physical Education</li> <li>• Languages (French)</li> <li>• Chapel</li> <li>• The Arts</li> <li>• Digital and Design Technologies</li> <li>• Sport</li> </ul>	Compulsory Subjects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Biblical Studies</li> <li>• English</li> <li>• Mathematics</li> <li>• Science</li> <li>• Humanities</li> <li>• Languages (French)</li> <li>• Technologies (Food, Textiles, Wood &amp; Plastic)</li> <li>• The Arts (Visual, Music, Drama)</li> <li>• Health &amp; Physical Education</li> <li>• Sport</li> </ul>

Years 9-10	Senior School (VCE)
Compulsory Subjects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Biblical Studies</li> <li>• English</li> <li>• Mathematics</li> <li>• Science</li> <li>• Humanities</li> <li>• Careers</li> <li>• Learning for Life (Yr 9)</li> <li>• Health &amp; Physical Education</li> <li>• Invictus Wellbeing Program</li> <li>• Sport</li> </ul> Electives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Arts - Visual Art</li> <li>• The Arts - Music</li> <li>• Design Tech - Food</li> <li>• Design Tech - Wood &amp; Plastic</li> <li>• Languages - French</li> <li>• Fast Track - VCE Psychology</li> </ul>	Compulsory Subjects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• English</li> <li>• Religion &amp; Society</li> </ul> Electives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Biology</li> <li>• Chemistry</li> <li>• Foundation Maths</li> <li>• General Maths</li> <li>• Health &amp; Human Development</li> <li>• Business Management</li> <li>• Maths Methods</li> <li>• Physical Education</li> <li>• Physics</li> <li>• Psychology</li> <li>• Art Making and Exhibiting</li> </ul> Virtual Schools Victoria / Victorian School of Languages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applied Computing</li> <li>• Art</li> <li>• French</li> </ul>





## Student Attendance

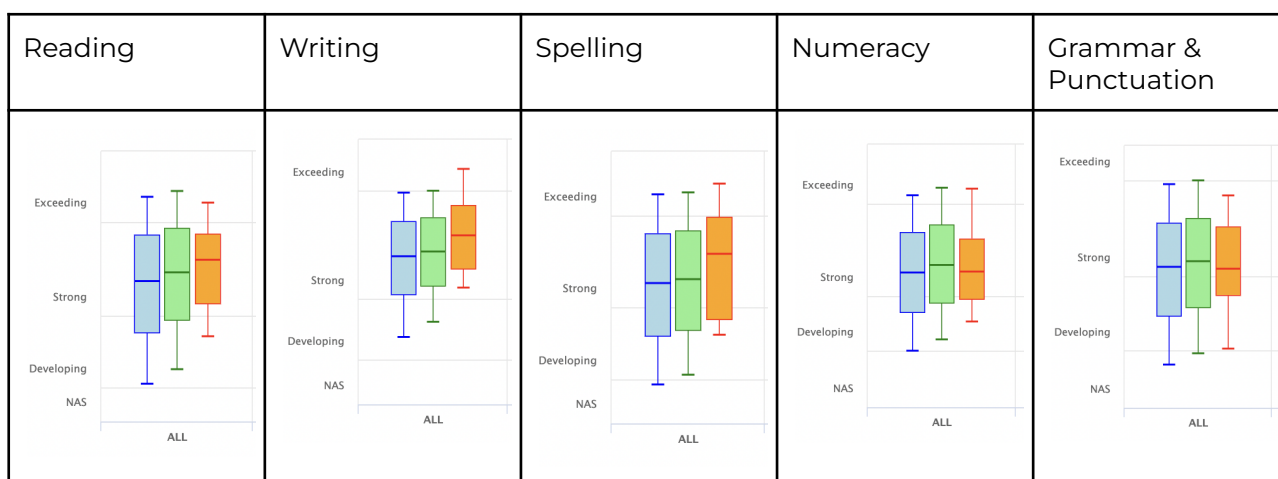
In 2023 the average daily attendance rate for students was 91.4%. The count of students with an attendance rate of >90% was 70.35%.

## National Benchmarks

The National Assessment Programs in Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) testing is conducted annually to show how a school or individual student is progressing according to national benchmarks. The assessments occur for all students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 across the following areas: Reading, Writing, Language Conventions (grammar, punctuation and spelling) and Mathematics. The charts below indicate how students at Gilson College (Mernda Campus) performed in 2023:

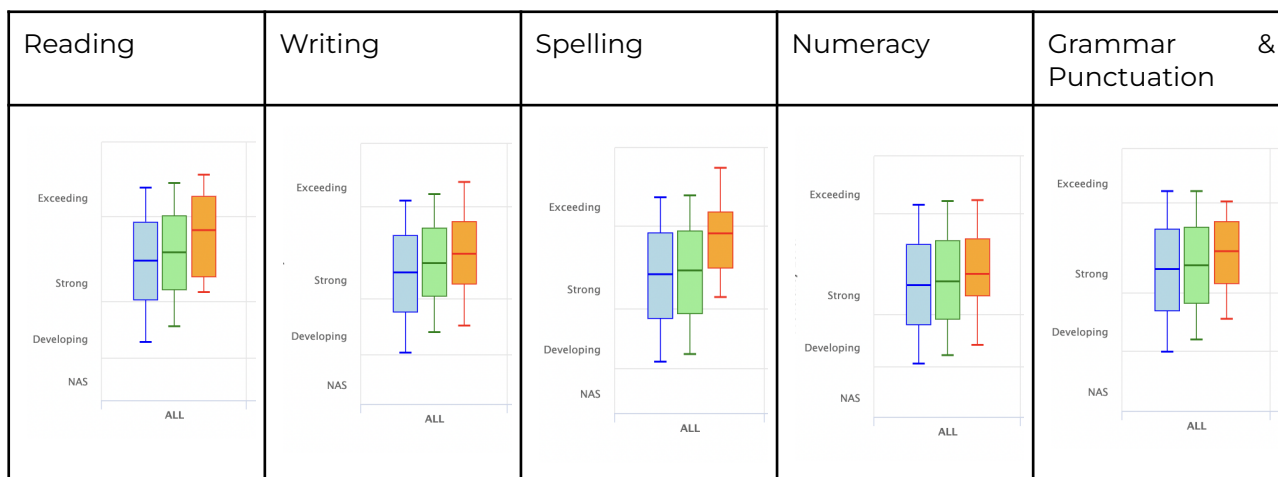
### Year 3 NAPLAN 2023

School Summary Report



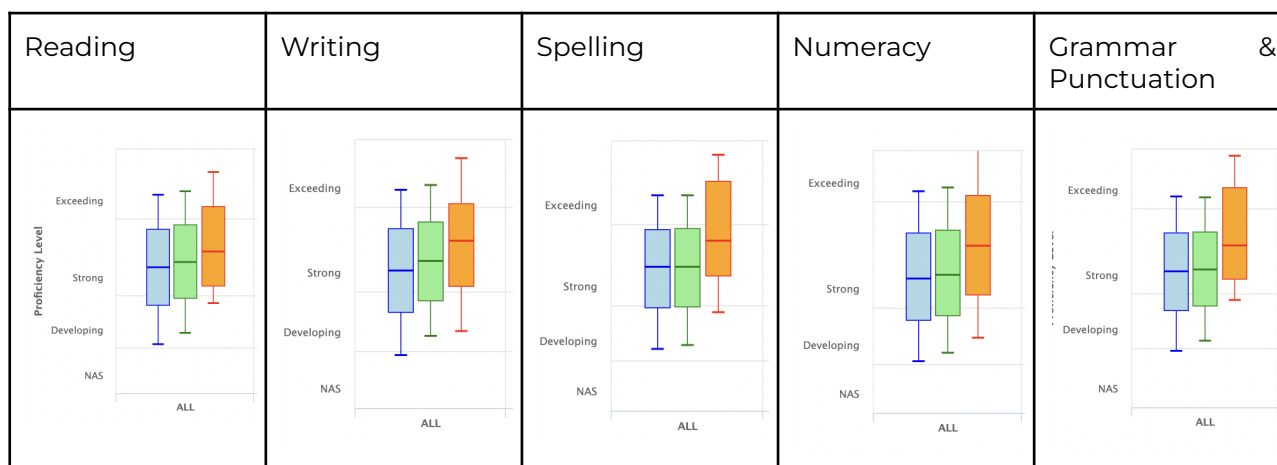
### Year 5 NAPLAN 2023

School Summary Report

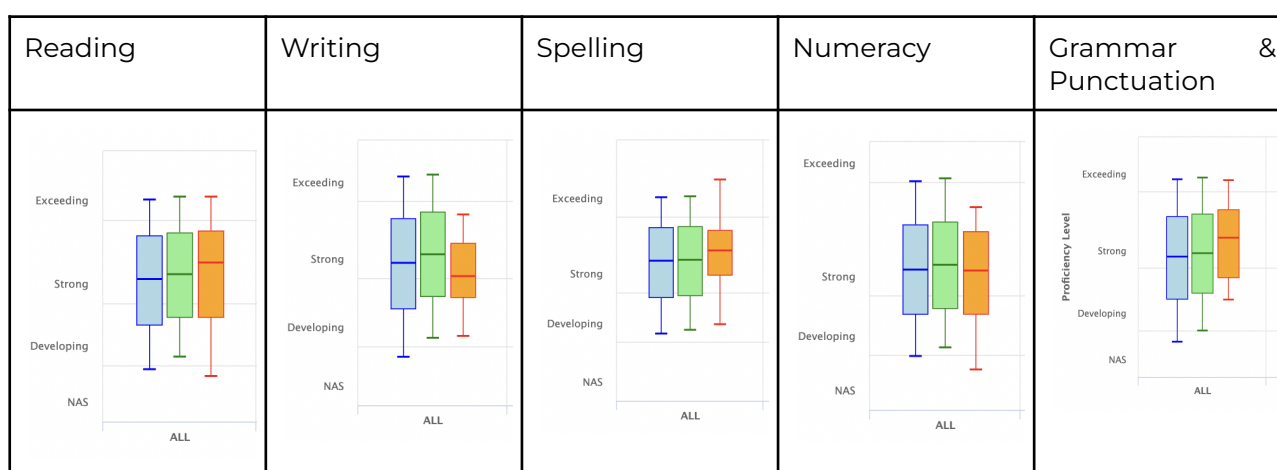




## Year 7 NAPLAN 2023 School Summary Report



## Year 9 NAPLAN 2023 School Summary Report



### Summary of Results

The work of our staff to continue to support students and enhance their academic performance have shown positive outcomes across different year levels. Our College's achievement in Numeracy, Reading, Writing and Spelling are at or above state and national averages in Years 3, 5 and 7. Year 9 students are achieving at or above state and national averages in Reading, Spelling and Grammar and Punctuation.

College staff continue to use evidence-based approaches to support student learning, and particular focus will be given to students' writing skills in lower secondary to effectively support their development as they prepare for the rigour of the VCE program. The VCOP and Big Write strategies are effective tools currently implemented within the Primary school, and will be built upon to support continued growth and success through secondary.



## VCE Results

We are proud of the Class of 2023 and their continued efforts in completing their VCE studies. As stated in our college purpose, we provide excellence in education to develop young people of integrity and Christian character. Holistic development is very important to us here at Gilson, and we have worked hard to create an environment where students belong and are nurtured and challenged to achieve their best. All Year 12 students in 2023 achieved their desired outcomes, and we affirm and congratulate them on their hard work throughout the year.

This year, we also want to acknowledge our first graduating student who is attending our affiliated university, Avondale University. We hope to see this connection with Avondale University continue to strengthen as we support students in their Adventist Education journey into tertiary studies.

### Summary of VCE Results

<b>Total Year 12 students</b>	<b>14</b>
Number of Tertiary (VTAC) applicants	14
University	79%
TAFE or Private Provider	7%
Apprenticeship / Full-Time Work	7%
Other	7%



# A Thriving Community

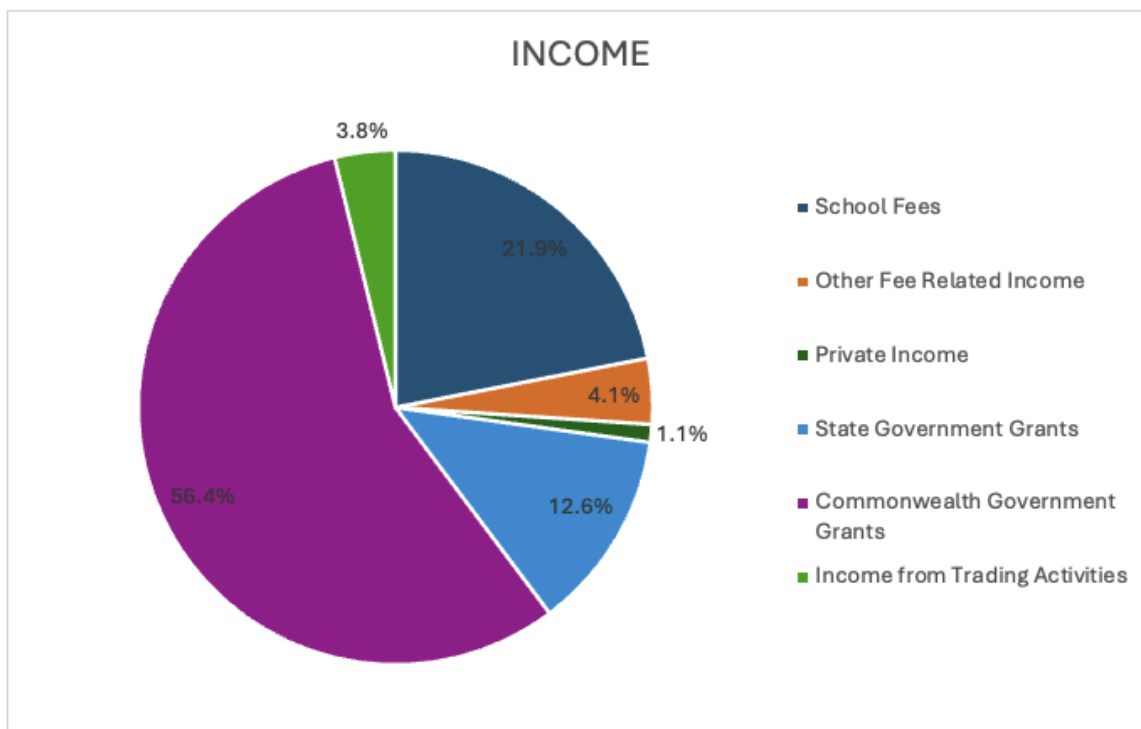
At Gilson College, we strive to provide a christian environment where students can thrive academically, but also build their relationship with Jesus, their peers, and their community. This underpins all opportunities we provide for students throughout the year. Throughout 2023 there were a vast range of different activities, events and programs for students to be involved in school life as part of a thriving community.

These included:

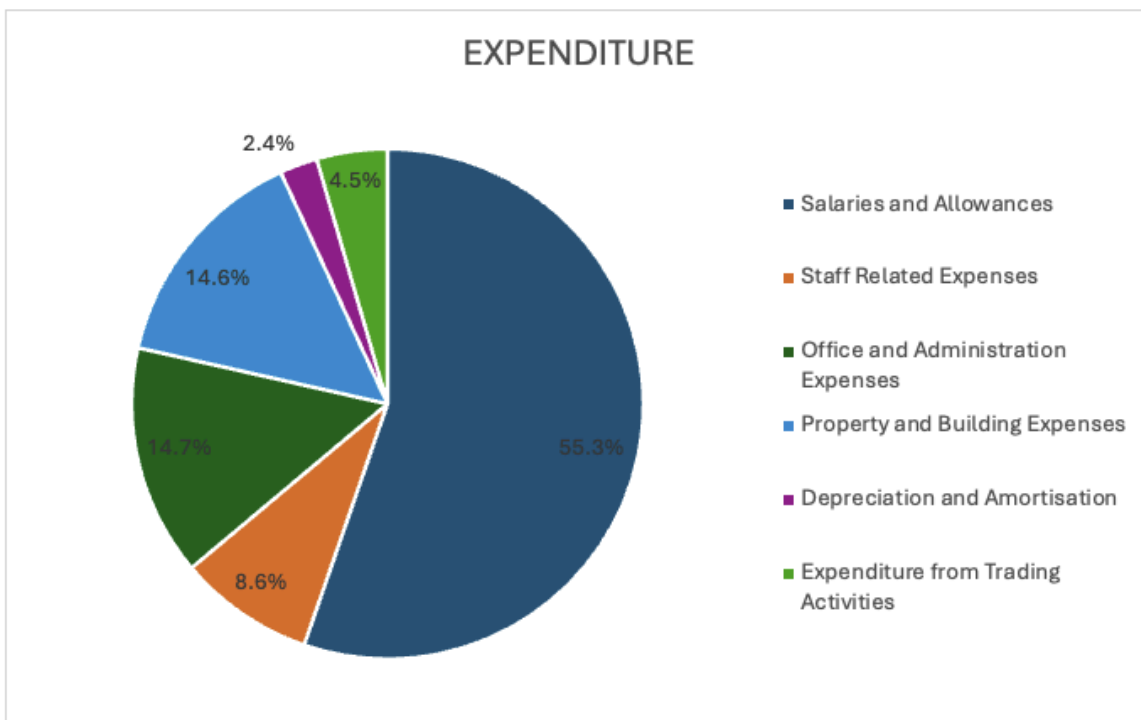
- Peer Support Program (Years 7 and 11)
- Buddy Program (Foundation and Year 6)
- Year 9 Learning for Life program
- Camps programs (Years 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12)
- Classroom and subject specific excursions and incursions
- Primary lunchtime clubs - including Gardening, Bible, Ukulele, Create (Lego & Art), Coding and Choir
- Academic Competitions including ICAS & The Australian Mathematics competitions
- Social Emotional Learning club
- Student led chapel and worship programs
- Positive Behaviour for Learning pastoral care program
- ASV Interschool Sports programs - athletics, soccer, cross country, basketball
- Weekly interschool sport competitions - primary soccer, primary basketball
- School Sports Victoria program participation - athletics, cross country, swimming
- Combined School Athletics Carnival
- Primary swimming lessons
- School Dedication Night
- Book Week Celebrations
- Harmony Day
- Primary Art Festival
- Secondary Production - A Fiddler on the Roof
- Primary Tutoring program - COVID impacted students
- After school Secondary Maths support program
- SRC events- Mothers and Fathers Day
- Homework Club
- Festival of Faith - theme: Be the Salt
- Bush School (Foundation)
- Foundation - Year 3 Christmas program

# Finance

## Income for 2023



## Expenditure for 2023





# Future Direction

As we look forward to 2024, we are excited with the upcoming opportunities for growth and development across our college!

## Quality Practice

Our staff remain committed to delivering high quality practice, both in the classroom and out. In 2024, we will focus on consolidating our identity as a stand-alone school, ensuring that our 'Mernda Way' for education is consistently high quality in all areas. By doing so, we are focusing on consistency in our high quality teaching that maximises learning opportunities for students and improves our academic rigour.

## Building Community

The heart of our College is to build a thriving Christ-centred learning community. We want to support students and staff to recognise the importance of collaboration and community. Next year, we will be focusing on improving opportunities for students to build strong connections with their peers and school, including a refresh of our Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L) framework and our House Culture. These parts of our College culture are founded on our core values of respect, responsibility, resilience and a learner mindset, and support the Christian ethos of our college and community.

## Investing in our Future

As our school continues to grow, we are aware of our obligations to provide a safe workplace and learning space for staff and students.

Throughout the year, a number of maintenance and grounds improvements have occurred, including clearing and fencing the back section of the school, significant internal and external painting works, the completion of our primary Maker Space and our Front Reception upgrade. The College is also working closely with Whittlesea Council to plan for upgrades to the College entrance, improving safety and access from Grafton Street and Bridge Inn Road.

In 2024, we look forward to the completion of the fit-out of the top floor of our Middle School building, providing an additional 8 learning spaces for students to further enhance our educational program and support growing student numbers.

Our masterplan is well established, with future projects identified and prepared for, now awaiting funding approval. These include plans for the construction of an Early Learning Centre and a Multipurpose Centre.