

Koonwarra Village School



School No. 2082

Annual Report

2020

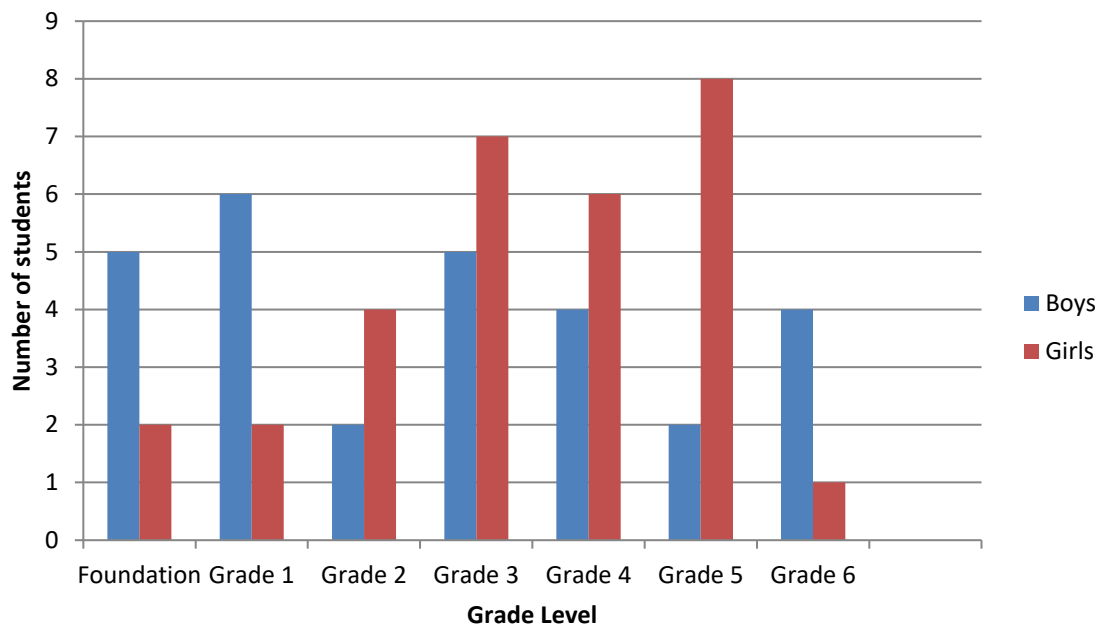


Contextual Information

Koonwarra Village School (KVS) opened its doors on 13th February 2012 in the former Koonwarra Primary School buildings – 20-26 Koala Drive, Koonwarra. The school is an Independent primary school offering enrolment for children in Foundation-Grade 6.

Profile of the Student Body

At the time of the Federal 2020 School Census, 28 boys and 30 girls were enrolled at the school.



None of the 58 students had Language Backgrounds Other Than English or were indigenous.

In 2020, the school's funding was based on Direct Measure of Income school of 87. This was based on the income of student's guardians.

Koonwarra Village School Board



Once again, it is a pleasure to report on the work of the KVS Board for the 2020 Annual Report. During 2020, our board members included Fiona McKenzie, Alyson Skinner, Rebecca Cooke, Rachel Carruthers and Jamie Sutherland. Sarah Maclean attends meetings as Principal and provides updates and operational reports to ensure the board is fully informed of matters affecting our school; Jenelle Coote provided admin support to the board and Natasha Rhodes was employed to report on our finances to the Board.

2020 was an unprecedented year – our school was able to reshape to ensure our students were able to learn at home, providing student materials and pastoral support for families faced with at home learning – it was a marvellous illustration of how flexible and adaptable our school community is, and how during tough times our broader community comes together to support each other. The Board was pleased to be able to offer some financial support to families over the year with a fee reduction for nearly half the year. We are pleased to note the school is still in a strong financial position.

Much of the work of the board is to ensure we have strong policies and procedures to guide the operations and financial management of the school and to undertake a governance role. Meeting eight times a year, board members contribute a range of skills and expertise and work together effectively and collegiately. I take this opportunity to thank each member of the board for their volunteer contribution to our school.

During 2019 and 2020, the board developed a robust and achievable strategic plan which, along with our strong vision and philosophy, guides and underpins the strategic operations of the school. Our strategic plan is always being updated as some of the milestones are achieved and other opportunities arise. The board liaises between the leadership team, board members and the school community and acts in the best interest of the School ensuring all legislative requirements and compliance reporting is undertaken.

2020 also saw the completion of the very significant capital works improvements to buildings and grounds at Koonwarra. With funding from the Victorian State Government (Victorian Independent Schools Block Ground Authority) along with contributions from the school, the buildings and grounds are now being utilised by our students and staff. This project originated in 2017 with the creative vision of Mike Wanstall who provided original drawings and scope of work; these formed the basis of two significant building improvements over the last few years, which now see our school as a gorgeous sustainable, purpose-built environment in which our school can flourish.

Alyson Skinner, KVS Chairperson

2020: An Unusual Year, COVID-19

2020 was an unprecedented year for the school and globally, as we faced a global pandemic. I am extremely proud of how our school community faced the ever-changing landscape of 2020. The school was closed as directed by the State Government at various times during the year, and the staff developed an innovative and creative on-line learning platform using Facebook Workplace. Our focus throughout the year was on maintaining community ties and supporting our families and staff through the challenges and uncertainties that we all faced during this time.

Most of our normal programs were impacted and our newest program, Passion Projects, which was due to start in 2020 was put on hold for most of the year. Families were provided with regular email updates throughout the year, and home-learning packs were delivered by our committed staff. Each week we included a surprise gift for the families, such as play-dough, biscuits or special craft activities. Weekly check-ins were done with each family via the phone or zoom, and student zoom sessions were organized to run lessons and to check in socially. Through the on-line platform, a variety of groups were established, both for learning and student connection. These included a nightly bedtime story, a group for live local explorations of different environments, a virtual camping group and a photography group.

Program Highlights

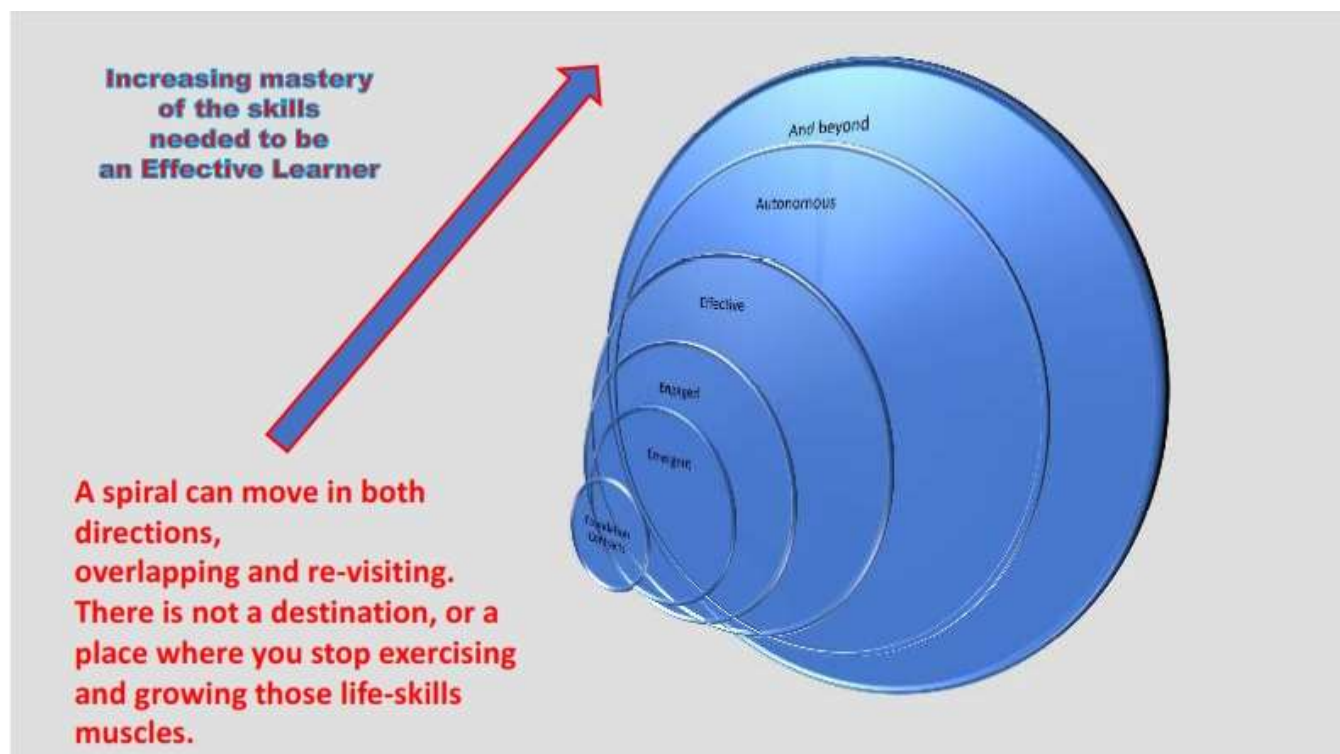
Koonwarra Village School uses the Victorian Curriculum as the basis of its academic program. The school's Philosophy and Guiding Principles outline the broader framework in which teaching and learning occurs.

The Village School Curriculum is a series of additional programs and elements integrated across all the features of school life and overviewed on our [website](#).



Learning Contracts

At the heart of our teaching and learning model is a comprehensive (KVS-created) framework that allows incremental development of the skills and attributes to become an Effective Learner.



An effective learner understands the skills needed to work independently and collaboratively to achieve learning success. A growth mindset allows students to 'exercise' and develop these skills, which include the suite of eleven executive skills.

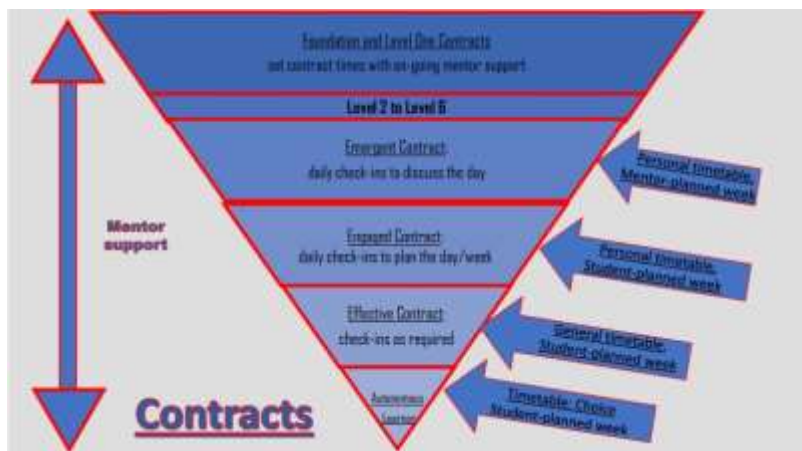
Learning Contracts provide the framework for teaching and learning at KVS. The intention is to

support children to become effective learners, with an understanding that these skills continue to develop over a lifetime and there is no 'fixed' endpoint. Contracts include a range of core numeracy and literacy tasks that can be undertaken by each child independently, as well as tasks that are set by mentors in small group presentations each week that build and extend the student's learning. The Foundation level contracts are simple in nature and aim to develop children's awareness of their ability to make choices

Emergent Learner Contract
 Cycle 1, Week 2, Feb 3rd - Feb 7th

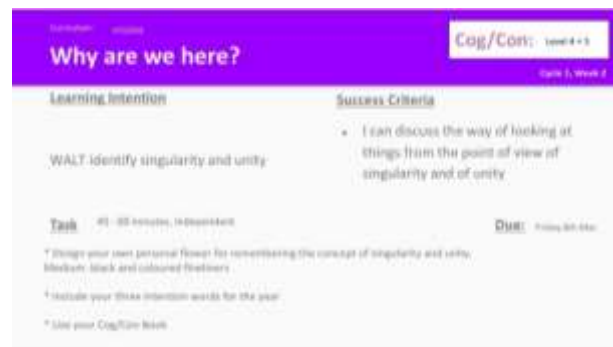
Name

TIME	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
8:30	Take On-Going Task Discussion	Take Partnam	Project Report Chat Text Joke	Spec Write Practice Scoops	Practice Speeding/IT Cards
9:45	Decorate Speeding Cards	Art Task	Cog/Con Task	Speeding Cards with Sarah (partnam)	Maths/Con/Ange
10:30					
11:00	Independent Reading	Reading Task	Panic (1.20-11.30)	Write Partable Kelly	Independent Reading
11:45	Reading HUB Ange	Write Notebook	Handwriting (2 pages)	Write Partable Kelly	Spec Write Task
12:30					
1:30	Art Stage Task	Cog/Con Partable Sarah	Spots	Writing Task	Unfinished work
2:15	Art Stage Task	PE Journal	Writing HUB Ange	Spots	Spots
3-3:15	CAREER / HOME				



which lead to success. As the children’s skills develop, the complexity of the contract increases, and they begin to share the decision making with their mentor about the order and timing of their work tasks. Over time, the level of support provided by the mentor reduces until children are working as Autonomous Learners.

Learning Contracts are used in conjunction with a structured daily timetable, which includes periods of small group direct instruction and whole group activities. [Sample contracts](#) are on our website.



The Learning Contracts and timetables are coupled with detailed Learning Task Cards that show clear Learning Intentions and Success Criteria, curriculum links and instructions on how to complete the task.

Playgroup & Foundation Transition Group



Our Bush Playgroup did not run for most of 2020, due to the global pandemic. Usually held each Friday morning, the KVS Bush



Playgroup allows families who are planning on joining the KVS community to become familiar with each other and the school’s philosophy and routines. In 2020 the program was facilitated by Lucy Pearce. The playgroup meets at Nirvana Park, Koonwarra and then the group joins the KVS community for morning tea.

Tribes

After a successful introduction in 2018, we continued with our whole school program called Tribes. Each student is placed in a tribe group along with a number of mentors. All students and mentors are included. The intention is to create smaller, supportive 'webs' of cross-age groups, so the students have the opportunity to develop stronger ties with a broader range of students. Tribe Time occurs each cycle and includes activities and, on occasions, shared meals. This dedicated time together encourages conversations between students across different age levels and allows new relationships to blossom. It is also a group of people from across the school that you can go to for support and allows older students to role model to younger students. This program is expected to deepen and become further embedded in the school culture in 2020.



Nature Journaling



Nature Journaling is the regular recording of observations, perception, and feelings about the natural world from first-hand experience. The intention for including regular nature journaling sessions in our program is to expose children to the value of the connection between people and their environment. We have found that it also helps to develop stillness in the children as they tune in to the sounds, sights and smells of nature.

In 2020, when opportunities arose, Nature Journaling was incorporated into our Camp program and Art for students in Level 2 to Level 6. The Sun Room students have weekly Nature Journaling sessions, exploring our beautiful local environment.

Personal Learning Projects (PLPs)

PLPs are a series of sign-up classes where students have the opportunity to learn and practise skills beyond those offered through regular curriculum activities. Generally, two PLPs are offered to Triskel students each cycle. In 2020, our PLP program did not run because of the disrupted school year.

One Act Plays



Each year, KVS participates in the One Act Play Festival in Foster. In 2020, the festival was cancelled. We ran a modified program, through our on-line platform, with students meeting via Zoom to rehearse two plays. 20 students choose to participate in the modified program, and one of the plays was performed when we returned to school in cycle 5. We were impressed at the student's dedication even though we were unable to perform to a large public audience in 2020.

Kitchen Garden



The KVS kitchen garden curriculum incorporates the Victorian Curriculum and the Village School Curriculum.

It involves garden and kitchen activities for all the year levels and builds on the skills and knowledge acquired in the previous year. Many activities are related to growing, harvesting and cooking as well as delving into the world of food production and processing, including looking after our own beehive.



There are also projects involving improvements to the overall kitchen garden environment. In 2020, our Kitchen/Garden went online for most of the year! Students received seeds and garlic bulbs in their Learning Packs, and there were regular gardening videos uploaded to help the students stay connected to the school garden

and to instruct them how to get their hands dirty in their home gardens.

There was also a cooking group, that featured videos of our kitchen team preparing tasty meals. All menus were available on-line and students were encouraged to share footage and photos of both their gardening and cooking experiences.



Camps



Family Camp (FAMP)

An annual event that kicks-off each year is the larger community Family Camp (FAMP). All students, their parents and siblings get together over three days for a mix of structured activities and connection as a community. In 2020, FAMP was held at the Cape Paterson Caravan Park, we felt grateful that we managed to run camp before the COVID-19 lock downs started.

Level 2 School Sleepover Challenge. (Modified)

Our camping program for younger students begins with the Level 2 School Sleepover Challenge. This is the first camp KVS students attend without parents. The aim is to provide an experience that is fun and relaxed in a comfortable and familiar environment with mentors who are well-known to the students. A small number of older students are also present to provide peer support and build on their leadership skills.

In 2020, this camp did not take place until later in the year, and we hired a lodge at Wilsons Prom for two nights. This combined the sleep-over challenge with the Level 2 Camp that usually occurs later in the year.



Level 3 Coopers Creek Camp



This was our first camp back after lock-down! It was an excited group of level three students who set up camp at the beautiful Coopers Creek. The focus of this camp in 2020 was connection and being out in nature. The main activities were whittling by the fire and swimming in the chilly waters of Coopers Creek. Wandering through the gold town of Walhalla and sharing dinner at the Wally Pub topped off a great camp!

Level 4 Bear Gully Camp

The Level 4's headed to a local camping spot: Bear Gully. A less developed campsite, featuring drop toilets and basic bush camping. Again, after the unusual year, our intentions were around connecting and enjoying each other's company again. Hours flew by as we told stories by the fire and explored wallaby trails through the bush. Slowing down to cook all meals on the fire and starrng up into the starry sky as we wandered along the beach at night.



Level 5 Tarra Bulga Camp

Level 5's went off chasing waterfalls in Tarra Bulga National Park for their 2020 camp! Sleeping amongst tree ferns and ancient gums, drifting off to the sound of the bubbling creek were amongst the highlights of this camp. We explored the area for waterfalls, went swimming in very cold water and cooked together in the giant stone fireplace. This location was so breathtaking that it may become one that we visit annually.



Level 5 and Level 6 Health Camp



Health Camp is a one-night camp that focuses on the Health curriculum for the Level 5 and 6 students.

It allows us to discuss sometimes embarrassing topics such as body changes and emotional growth in a neutral environment.

The camp accommodation is in a lodge, so we can be comfortable and have easy access to delicious food, hot showers and comfortable beds.

Graduates Camp

The four Graduates did not have the opportunity to raise funds for their camp in 2020, so we ended up hiring a house in Sandy Point for two nights and living a life of luxury.

The staff cooked the students a three-course dinner to celebrate their year and we went on a boat trip around the iconic Wilsons Prom.

Hours of playing pool, sunset walks and fish and chips on the beach allowed the graduates to enjoy some time together after their year of remote learning.



Grounds Master Plan and Capital Works Project

During 2020, we completed the capital works project that we secured funding for in 2018. Luckily, the building works were able to go ahead, and in June 2020 we were able to walk through our incredible new open-learning space, fresh offices and an expansive new kitchen. The spaces have allowed us to have ample room for our growing number of Triskel students Landscaping and a new fence completed the front of our school, and a small side project converted the building affectionately known as the Hub into a focused learning space for our Level 2 students. Now known as "The Storybook Cottage" it allows the Level 2 students a place to transition to from the Sun Room before stepping into the larger and busier Triskelion spaces.



2020 Graduates

Four students graduated in 2020. One of these students completed their entire primary school journey at KVS! The graduates were sent off with a rousing Graduation Ceremony and outdoor community picnic, as appropriate under COVID guidelines. Each graduate received a beautiful quilt created with lino cut designs by the students and staff of KVS, and one of the four students is attending Village High School.



Staff

Our teachers are known as Mentors, to reflect the partnership that we consider is involved in a holistic approach to academic learning and personal development. Students have the opportunity to work with several Mentors during the week which allows them to experience a variety of relationships. Seven teachers were employed in a part-time capacity for classroom duties in 2020.

Sarah Maclean (B.Sci, Grad. Dip. Ed. (Primary)) is the Principal and works across the school in a range of Village Curriculum areas.

Lizzie Price (Graduate Diploma (Primary Ed.)), worked with our Foundation students and Kelly Hunter (B. Ed, B. Teach), worked in the Sun Room with children in Foundation-Grade 1 as well as across Literacy and Numeracy for our Level 2s.

Angus Henderson (Grad Dip Ed, BA, M Soc Sc) worked as a specialist teacher, working across the school for Kitchen Garden and Literacy for our older students. Scott Egan (B.Ed (Primary)) held the role of specialist teacher, working with the Level 2-6 students for Specialist Maths, Humanities, Spelling and Handwriting. John Clarke (B.Sport & Recreation/B.Ed) delivered the Passion Projects program across the school. Henry Rushford (B.Sport & Recreation/B.Ed) specializes in camps and PLPs, and works across all three Village Schools



*Back L-R: John Clark, Janelle Coote, Sarah Maclean, Jacqui Haysom, Scott Egan
Front L-R: Angus Hendersom, Lisa Piercy, Lizzie Price, Kelly Hunter, Shannon Letcher
Absent from photo: Lucy Pearce, Philippa Lloyd, Henry Rushford & Donna Clark*

Children in both classes were supported during the year by classroom assistants – Lisa Piercy, Jacqui Haysom, Shannon Letcher, Lauren Macri and Hafis Matthews. The administration and facilities activities were supported by Jenelle Coote and Donna Clark. The kitchen was managed by Philippa Lloyd for the first semester and our Bush Playgroup was coordinated by Lucy Pearce.

At the end of 2020 we had a number of staff changes, for various reasons. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Philippa, Lauren, John and Jenelle for all their hard-work and dedication to KVS over the time they were employed.

Staff Feedback

In September, a Staffing Questionnaire was distributed which enabled Mentors to directly state their preferred teaching levels, learning areas and days of work for the following year. This information was used to prepare the timetable and spread of teaching responsibilities in 2020.

Professional Conversations were modified in 2020, with ongoing discussions with all staff as we responded to the COVID pandemic. Staff were offered the opportunity to take up counselling service if they needed further support over the year.

Community Feedback

Parents and students have various forums in which to feedback their level of satisfaction on the programs and operations of the school. The weekly whole school parliament allows students the opportunity to input suggestions into the development of school activities and programs, and this was conducted over Zoom in 2020.

In June and December, parents were involved in formal meetings (20 minutes) with a panel of staff members to discuss their child's academic performance. This is also an opportunity for staff to receive parents' response to the semester's activities. In 2020, we did not run our usual Presentation Nights and interviews were offered via Zoom.

Teachers maintain regular contact with parents via email, phone calls or direct contact after school throughout the school year to ensure the flow of information between home and school is timely and frequent.



Student Outcomes



Written reports relating to student academic progress were provided to parents in June and December, covering all learning areas, as well as including a personal letter written to each child from a Mentor. These reports were accompanied by a parent/teacher/student meeting, scheduled for all families. Foundation students receive a Portfolio rather than a written report, it contains work samples, photographs and provides a fantastic reflective record of student growth during their first year of school. In 2020, the reports were modified to reflect the learning areas covered during the pandemic.

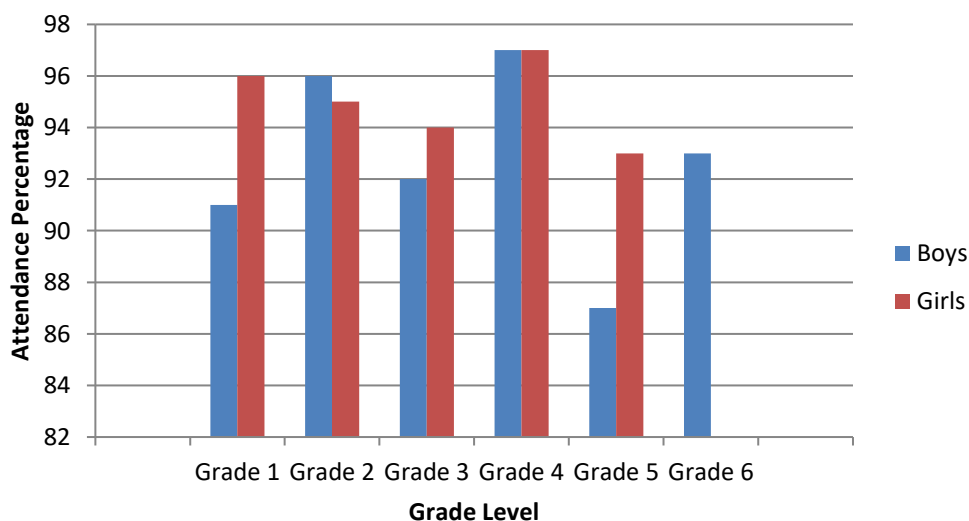
NAPLAN Testing

NAPLAN was cancelled in 2020 due to Covid-19.

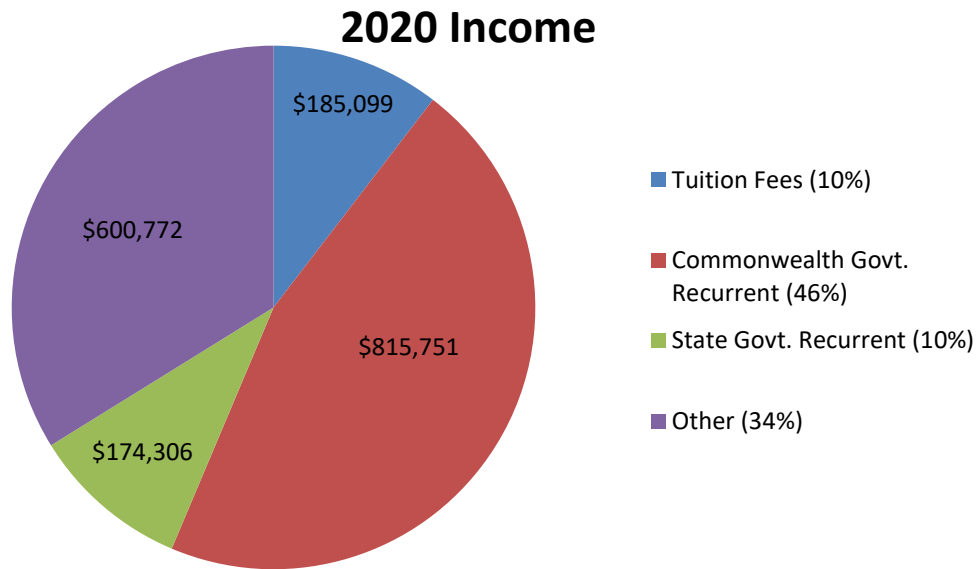
Student attendance

The attendance rate of all full-time students who were enrolled at KVS for the whole year was an average of 94%. Some students were absent for longer than usual periods of time due to family holidays and with a small cohort of students this can affect the overall percentage. Attendance is based on data submitted to ACARA and does not include Foundation students. To protect student privacy, we have excluded data for small cohorts.

When a child is absent, parents are expected to notify a staff member by phone call, email, text message or direct contact. If no contact has been received from parents, staff contact the parents to determine the cause of the absence.



Income by Funding Source



This year's "Other Income" category is significantly higher than in previous years as it includes \$490,500 for the capital works project and \$100,000 additional Commonwealth funding linked to Covid-19 cash flow assistance for small independent schools.