

Merriwa Education Support Centre 2025 Annual Report



Principal's Message



Our whole-school approach to teaching and learning continues to create meaningful opportunities for success for all students. Throughout 2025, we proudly celebrated the progress of our students alongside families, therapists and staff. Our focus remained firmly on delivering purposeful programs and strengthening our resources to ensure an excellent education for students with specific and additional learning needs at Merriwa Education Support Centre (ESC).

Building on Merriwa ESC's strong reputation as a high-quality specialist setting has been a key priority. Student success—evident through the achievement of individual learning outcomes—reflects the dedication of our staff teams, who consistently design and deliver engaging, authentic and purposeful educational programs. Staff continued to participate in targeted professional learning and mentoring to further develop expertise in early literacy and numeracy. Explicit, intentional teaching approaches again proved highly effective, enabling students to make measurable progress against their individual goals. Our professional staff worked collaboratively with a range of therapists, maintaining a shared commitment to ensuring success for every student. High expectations for learning and behaviour remain central to our practice, with programs tailored to support each child to achieve to their fullest capability.

Staff also engaged in ongoing, rigorous self-reflection to review programs, policies and whole-school plans. This continual improvement cycle ensures best practice and a consistent teaching approach across the school. Staff provided a variety of evidence sources to demonstrate that we continue to meet performance expectations at a High to Outstanding level.

Data-informed practice remained a strong feature in 2025. Staff used achievement data to form targeted ability groups in literacy and numeracy across the middle and senior Phases of Learning (PLC groups). This approach streamlined teaching, increased instructional precision, and resulted in clear improvements in student achievement. The success of this initiative has encouraged teachers to continue designing deliberate learning groups in 2026.

We welcomed new enrolments throughout the year and conducted numerous tours for prospective families. Student numbers have remained steady, and we are planning to operate 13 classes in 2026.

As always, I extend my heartfelt thanks to our dedicated staff for their exceptional work, and to our parents and students for their ongoing support and positive contributions. Together, we continue to build a vibrant, inclusive and successful learning community.

Board Chair's Message

Karen Macri

2025 has been a productive and successful year for the Merriwa Education Support Centre school community. As the first year operating with an independent School Board, a strong and collaborative foundation has been established, with the Board working closely with Principal Karen Macri and the leadership team to provide effective governance, strategic oversight, and support for positive student outcomes.

Throughout 2025, the Board has supported key priorities including student wellbeing, inclusive education, and community engagement. Merriwa Education Support Centre continues to foster a safe and nurturing learning environment where students are encouraged to make meaningful progress and achieve their individual potential.

I would like to acknowledge and thank our Board Members for their valuable contribution. The Board is made up of Staff, Parents, and Community Stakeholders whose collective knowledge and experience have supported effective leadership and informed decision-making throughout the year. Appreciation is also extended to the dedicated staff, supportive families, and the wider school community for their ongoing involvement and partnership.

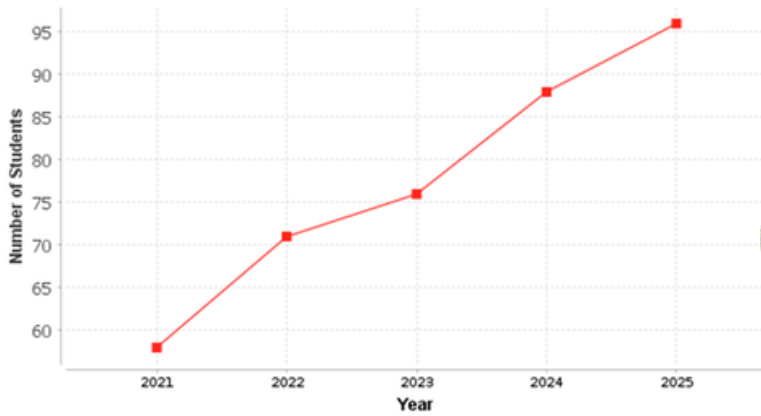
I would also like to recognise the outstanding leadership of Principal Karen Macri, whose dedication and professionalism throughout 2025 have contributed significantly to the stability and progress of the school. On behalf of the Board, I extend our sincere thanks to Karen for her continued commitment.

The Board looks forward to continuing to work collaboratively in 2026 to support the school's strategic direction and promote ongoing growth and achievement for all students.

Olive Lee

Student Enrolments and Attendance

Semester 2 Student Numbers



Semester 2	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Primary (Excluding Kin)	58	71	76	88	96

Primary	Kin	PPR	Y01	Y02	Y03	Y04	Y05	Y06	Total
Full Time	(5)	10	22	13	13	12	7	19	101
Part Time	10								

Note: The Kin Full Time student figure represents the Full Time Equivalent of the Part Time students

	Kin	PPR	Pri	Sec	Total
Male	8	6	65		79
Female	2	4	21		27
Total	10	10	86		106

ENROLMENT

Enrolments continued to grow steadily throughout the year, reflecting the strong demand for our specialised programs. Merriwa ESC supports students from Kindergarten to Year 6 with a wide range of disabilities and complex learning needs. Our cohort includes students with Intellectual Disability, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Cerebral Palsy, Vision Impairment, and a variety of medical conditions. Students are eligible to enrol when their diagnosed disability significantly impacts their capacity to access learning in a mainstream setting.

Together with our co-located Primary School, the cultural and linguistic diversity of our combined student population enriches the welcoming and inclusive environment that characterises Merriwa ESC.

Primary Attendance Rates

	Attendance Rate	
	School	WA Public Schools
2023	81.4%	88.9%
2024	84.1%	89.4%
2025	82.5%	89.1%

ATTENDANCE

Merriwa ESC continues to work closely with families to re-engage vulnerable students.

Student attendance is further impacted by ongoing therapy and medical needs of students whose condition determines their ability to attend regularly.

Workforce

	No	FTE	AB'L
Administration Staff			
Principals	1	1.0	0
Associate / Deputy / Vice Principals	2	1.6	0
Total Administration Staff	3	2.6	0
Teaching Staff			
Other Teaching Staff	20	16.1	0
Total Teaching Staff	20	16.1	0
Allied Professionals			
Clerical / Administrative	4	3.2	0
Other Allied Professionals	49	42.1	1
Total Allied Professionals	53	45.3	1
Total	76	64.0	1



Note

All teaching staff meet the professional requirements to teach in Western Australian public schools and can be found on the public register of teachers of the Teacher Registration Board of Western Australia.

QUALIFICATIONS

In accordance with Department of Education requirements, all staff have Working with Children Checks and National Police Clearance. Teaching staff have experience with working in an Education Support Setting. Graduate teachers are supported with a mentor and encouraged to attend graduate modules throughout the year. Education Assistants are qualified with Special Needs certificates and are provided with additional training as identified. MESCS has employed five Lead EAs and **twelve** Advanced EAs. There has been an intentional focus on recruiting and retaining high quality, skilled teaching and support staff.

WORKFORCE PLANNING

The majority of staff at MESCS are permanently employed to the Department of Education, having been appointed through the public service merit selection, recruitment process. With increasing enrolments and movement of staff through transfer, extended leave, or maternity leave, it has been necessary to recruit new teachers and education assistants each year. In 2024 various merit selection processes were completed to appoint staff to vacated and new positions and to establish additional classrooms, to accommodate the increase in student numbers. Lead Education Assistants facilitate mentoring and training programs for newly appointed EA staff.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Staff at MESCS are encouraged and supported to engage in collaborative practices to build the capacity of their colleagues.

- All staff have participated in ongoing, relevant performance management processes and required professional learning to build strength in performance.
- Staff meetings, Collaborative workshops and Professional Development days focus on student improvement and teacher development.
- Professional Learning opportunities relate to improving curriculum knowledge, self-development, increasing knowledge and understanding of disabilities and medical management procedures, pedagogy development and school targets, and are guided by performance management.
- Staff have embraced improved reflection on performance using a collaborative approach, sharing expertise and participating in peer observation.
- Professional Learning and Training included: Team Teach workshops, First Aid training, a Positive Behaviour Approach, Speech and AAC strategies, Learning Disorders and Effective learning strategies.

Student Achievement and Progress

Student assessment continues to be a central component of the school's learning model. Throughout 2025, Merriwa ESC maintained a strategic and consistent approach to data collection and assessment, enabling us to make informed judgments about student achievement—both academic and non-academic—as well as overall school operations. Our assessment processes remained focused on gathering meaningful data that supports planning, tracks student growth, and guides improvements in teaching and learning.

Classroom-based assessments and whole-school testing were administered early in Terms 1, 2 and 4 to establish baseline data and monitor incremental progress across the year. Diagnostic assessment tools were utilised to inform teaching programs, ensuring each student's education plan was responsive to their individual needs, provided appropriate challenge, and supported successful goal achievement.

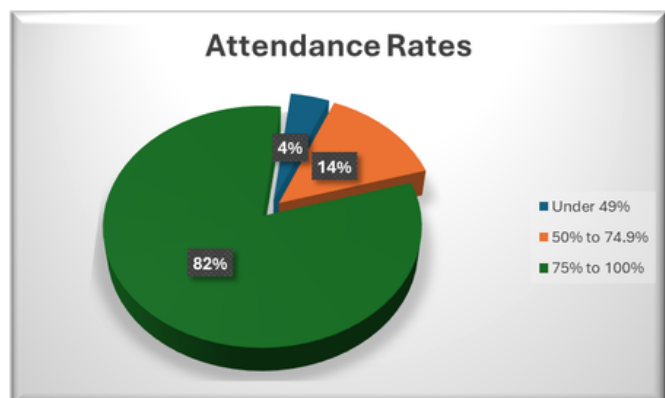
Assessment data was recorded in the school's student tracking system, allowing staff to monitor progress, identify emerging concerns, and evaluate the effectiveness of targeted interventions. Teachers continued to use the Letters and Sounds Tracking Tool alongside a comprehensive mathematics assessment framework to support student learning in core areas.

The school remained committed to developing student competencies in Literacy, Communication and Numeracy, recognising the importance of these foundation skills across all curriculum areas. Individual student goals were set and monitored through the SEN Planning framework and ABLEWA tools, with progress formally reported each semester. Teaching staff also utilised the Reporting to Parents platform to set relevant curriculum content descriptors and design Individual Education Plans (IEPs) aligned with student needs.

Moderation processes strengthened consistency across the school, including agreement on the number and type of content descriptors used under each reporting heading. The MESC Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting (CAR) Policy—initially implemented in 2022 and reviewed in 2024—was further refined at the end of 2025 to align with updated Department of Education requirements and ensure continued consistency across all classes.

In 2025, SEN Reporting Data indicated strong improvement. The proportion of goals achieved within the 75%–100% range increased, while goals falling below the desired benchmark decreased by 14%. Attendance within the 75%–100% range also rose by 11%. These trends demonstrate steady progress, increased consistency, and ongoing improvement across all learning areas.

While identified student have not made gains in Mathematics and English their achievements in Personal Social have been significant as indicated in goals achieved.

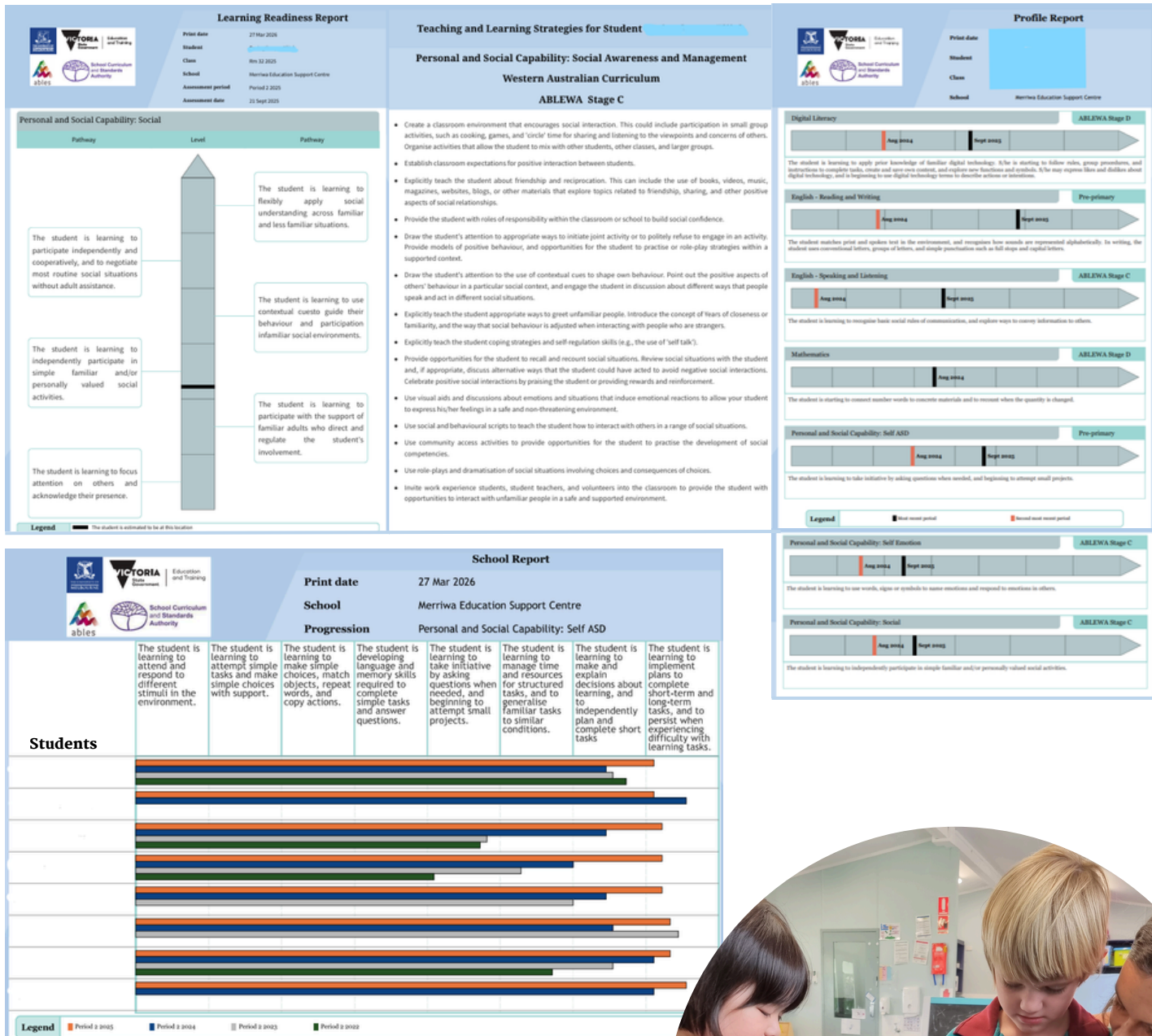


Student Achievement and Progress

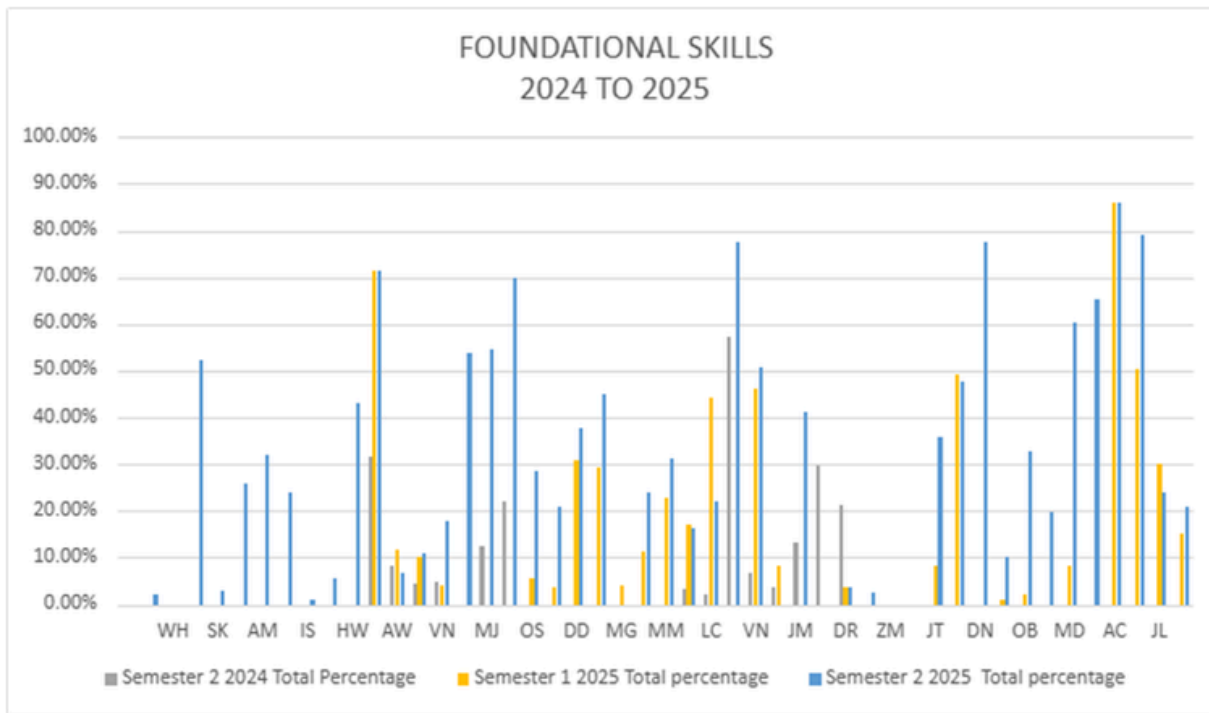
Abilities Based Learning Education WA (ABLEWA) Assessment Data

In 2025, teachers completed the ABLEWA observational assessments, which capture students' skills and abilities during everyday classroom interactions. The online survey takes approximately 20 minutes per student and is completed in Term 3 across four domains: Digital Literacy, English – Speaking and Listening, English – Reading and Writing, and Personal and Social Capability. Assessment outcomes supported teachers in identifying appropriate curriculum levels and informing targeted planning through Individual Education Plans.

The ABLEWA platform provided graphical data that enabled staff to analyse progress, identify patterns, and plan collaboratively across classes. Profile Reports offered a clear overview of each student's strengths and challenges at three points in time. This year, Mathematics was removed as a compulsory ABLEWA domain, as existing mathematics data provides a more specific measure for monitoring progress and supporting forward planning. Mathematics assessments are now completed at teacher discretion.



Student Achievement and Progress



In 2025, measurable progress was supported through the continued refinement and modelling of the Foundational Skills Assessment (FSA). Introduced in 2022, with informal data collection undertaken across 2023 and 2024, the assessment reached full implementation in 2025 following a final consensus on its structure and required processes.

The FSA measures 21 Early Learning Essential Skills developed by a school psychologist and behavioural consultant to support students prior to commencing formal learning in Mathematics and Literacy. Scripted questioning ensures consistency and accuracy across classrooms. Students achieving below 80% in the Term 2 Conceptual Maths assessment complete the FSA in Term 4, enabling teachers to identify skill gaps and provide targeted support.

An AAC version of the assessment is available for non-verbal students, those using assistive communication devices, and students with physical challenges. Teachers select the most appropriate version based on individual student needs.

Kindergarten students complete the assessment individually in Term 4, with results used to inform Pre-Primary planning. FSA data contributes directly to the development of Individualised Education Plans, ensuring learning programs are responsive and personalised. This approach supports early identification, structured intervention, and consistent monitoring of foundational skill development.



Behaviour Data

Teachers record behaviour incident information on the Compass Chronical record system as required. Risk Management Plans and Individual Behaviour Management plans are consistently followed and reviewed to ensure the safety of students and staff.

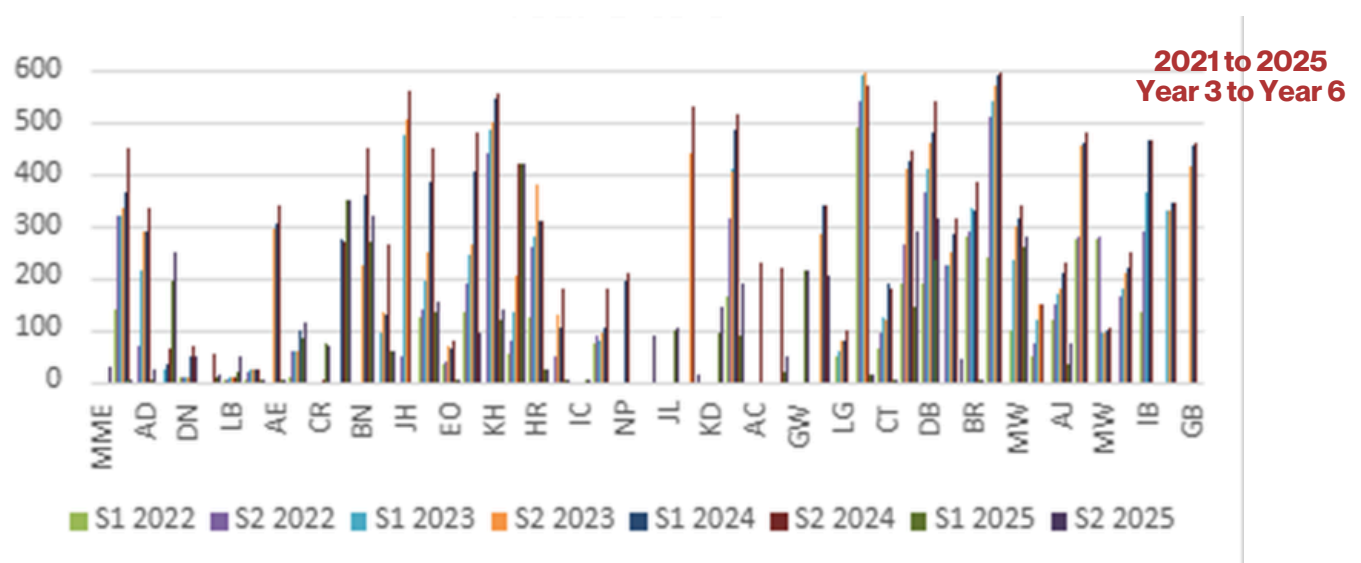
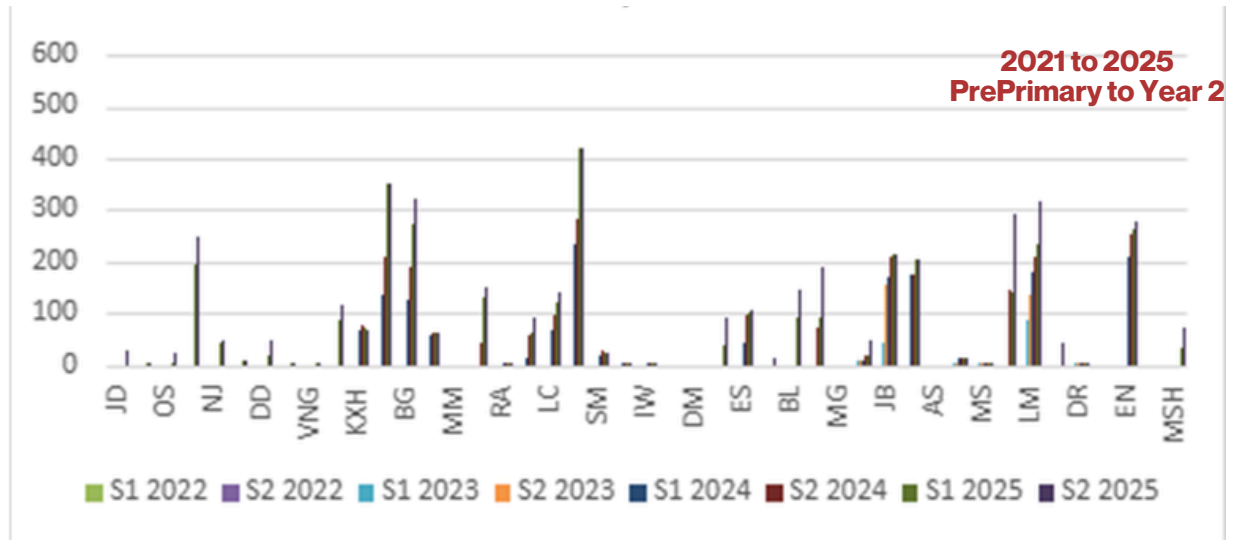
Critical incidents, including physical assault, accidents and injury to students or staff, are reported online as they occur. Merriwa ESC has clear procedures for reporting and managing behavioural incidents. Staff utilise the newly implemented Compass platform to record information.

The newly created position of Complex Behaviour Support Co-ordinator was introduced towards the end of the year with initiatives to be rolled out throughout 2026.

Student Achievement and Progress

Literacy- Letters and Sounds

In 2025, analysis of Letters and Sounds data indicates strong and sustained progress across the school. A significant 91.11% of junior students (Kindergarten–Year 2) demonstrated measurable gains in their individual understanding of letters and sounds, while 90.2% of senior students (Years 3–6) showed steady and consistent progress over the year. Overall, 90.66% of students made gains in this key literacy area, exceeding the school's target of 80%. These results reflect the effectiveness of explicit teaching practices, targeted assessment, and consistent monitoring, and highlight the school's continued commitment to strengthening foundational literacy skills for all learners.



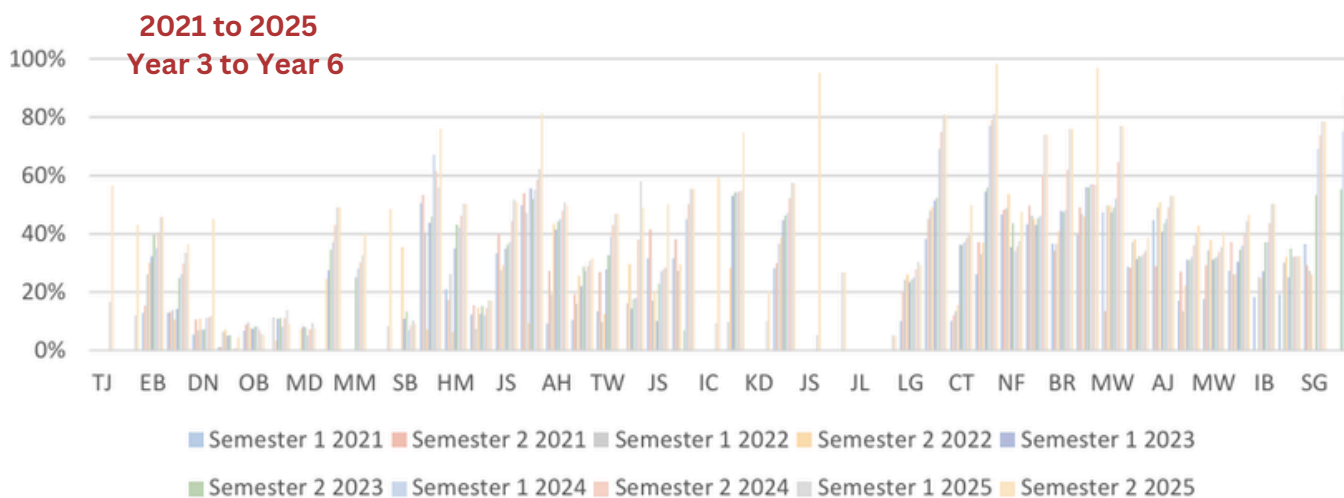
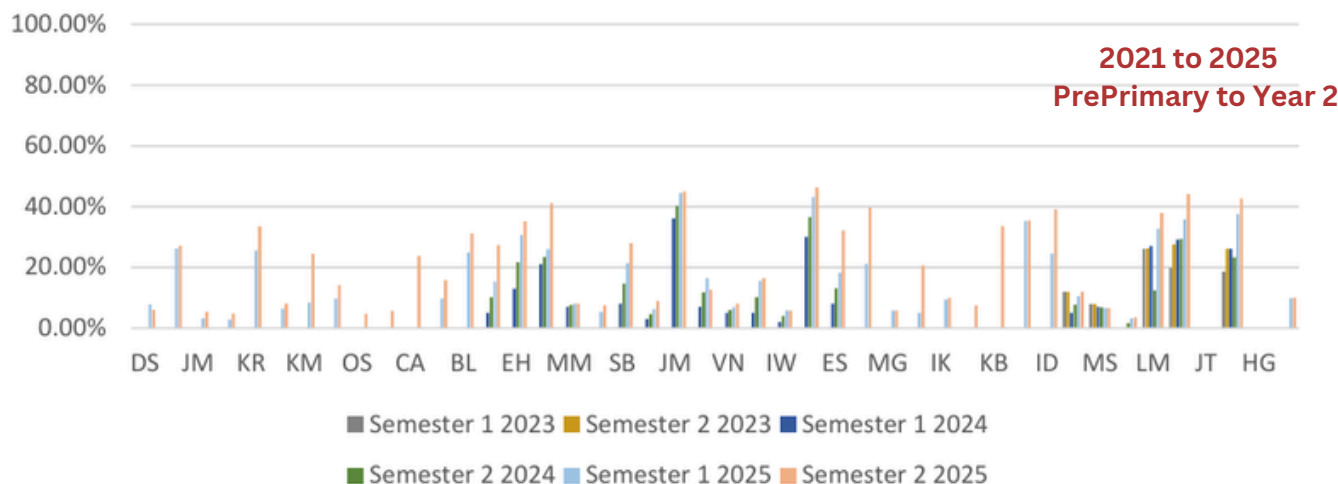
Students are assessed to identify their starting point in the Letters and Sounds program, ensuring instruction is targeted and responsive from the outset. Explicit teaching within each phase, aligned with the whole-school Literacy Plan, supports students to systematically develop the skills required to progress over time. Assessment data demonstrates consistent and, in many cases, substantial individual progress, confirming the effectiveness of this structured approach.

The Letters and Sounds program remains an appropriate and effective strategy for developing foundational literacy skills. Students have shown gradual and measurable improvements in their understanding of key literacy concepts, with progress monitored throughout the year using the Letters and Sounds Tracking Tool. Teachers employ a range of evidence-based strategies, including explicit instruction, targeted practice and drills, and hands-on learning activities, to strengthen phonological awareness and support reading and writing development.

In 2025, formal implementation of Sound Waves Literacy further strengthened literacy delivery through streamed instruction across multiple Phases of Learning Communities (PLCs), ensuring students were met at their point of need. Collectively, these aligned teaching practices and targeted interventions resulted in strong outcomes, with 90.66% of students demonstrating gains in Letters and Sounds in 2025, exceeding the school's target of 80% and reflecting sustained whole-school improvement in literacy learning.

Student Achievement and Progress

Numeracy - Number Knowledge



In 2025, MESc continued to strengthen its whole-school approach to numeracy, ensuring all students practised and consolidated essential mathematical skills. Teaching programs across all classrooms consistently incorporated explicit instruction, regular revision, drills, rotational activities, and hands-on learning using concrete and abstract materials. The continued use of a whole-school data collection tool enabled staff to assess student achievement during practical learning experiences and make informed instructional decisions.

A comprehensive mathematics assessment framework, aligned with the whole-school plan and underpinned by ABLEWA and WA Curriculum performance descriptors, continued to support the monitoring of student progress along a continuum of learning. Teachers worked collaboratively within Phases of Learning Communities (PLCs), using data to group students according to ability, ensuring teaching and learning remained targeted and responsive. Overall, 93.11% of students across all year levels demonstrated improvement in Mathematics, representing an increase from the previous year and exceeding the school's performance target of 80%.

The sustained improvement in student outcomes enabled the Centre to continue and expand its mathematics extension opportunities. The Origo Mathematics Program, first introduced in 2022, remained a key strategy for extending students who demonstrated higher-level numeracy skills. Following its gradual expansion in 2023 and 2024, a formal maths streaming model was continued in 2025, comprising four Origo groups to cater for a broader range of student abilities. Students who demonstrated achievement beyond a Year 2 numeracy level accessed explicit instruction in higher-level content, including measurement and geometry, and statistics and probability.

Teachers collaborated within PLCs to analyse assessment data and determine appropriate group placements, strengthening consistency and alignment to student learning needs. Ongoing ability-based grouping supported improved engagement and ensured instruction was closely matched to student understanding.

In preparation for 2026, data collection processes were further refined during 2025, with all Origo year levels, modules and concepts consolidated into a single tracking document. This refinement enabled clearer identification of cohort-wide learning gaps, strengthened progress monitoring, and supported greater consistency in data use and moderation practices across PLCs.

National School Opinion Survey

Our Community Survey was distributed in 2025 using the new survey tool created by the Department of Education.

Parents and Carers Response:

Due to a disappointing response with less than 10% of our parent community engaging in the survey, the results cannot be used to indicate a true reflection of parent satisfaction with our school. However, informal interactions with our parent/carer community reflect an overwhelming vote of confidence for our school. The majority of parents/carers indicate their satisfaction with learning programs and support for their child's overall progress. Respectful relationships with parents/carers, listening to their concerns and opinions is paramount for successful partnerships and better outcomes for students. Along with the School Board, we have decided to redistribute the survey in 2026.

Staff Response:

Staff morale remains strong despite the inherent challenges and complexities of the role. The majority of staff report feeling valued for their contributions and express satisfaction with the quality of education provided to students. They also believe that staff genuinely care about the wellbeing and progress of the students in our care. Additionally, staff indicate they would recommend Merriwa ESC to others and agree that the school is well managed by an effective and supportive leadership team.

The satisfaction rating ranged from 76% to 96% positive response from the 47 participants.

Comments received:

Since starting at Merriwa ESC, I have felt incredibly supported by my colleagues and leadership team. The positive relationships I've built make coming to work each day enjoyable and rewarding.

The learning environment at Merriwa ESC is incredibly supportive and engaging for both staff and students. As a graduate teacher, I have found it to be a place that encourages growth, collaboration and reflection. The students thrive in a setting that values the individuality and promotes meaningful learning experiences.

We have a strong leadership team who are all very approachable and willing to listen and assist when needed.

School Priorities and Milestones

At Merriwa ESC we have a strong focus on student achievement and wellbeing. It is our priority to create conditions to develop each child's independence and to provide opportunities for each child to experience success in achieving their individual goals. We know that student success is reliant on collaborative partnerships between educators, parents and carers, and external agencies to support the 'whole child'.

The Business Plan 2024 - 2026 articulates our intention for progress. The priority areas are outlined under the following focus areas:

Focus 1: Student Achievement and Quality Teaching

- Students will achieve progress against their individual learning goals as evidenced by longitudinal tracking data.
- Staff will be reflective and identify skill deficits which require development.

Focus 2: Student Engagement

- Student achievement data aligns with attendance trends.
- Students will show progress in their individual goals around Personal and Social Competencies.

Focus 3: Partnerships

- High rates of parent/carer interaction will be evident via communication platforms.
- Community survey results will reflect positive interactions with key stakeholders.

Whole school approach to meet expectations:

- Upskilling staff and resourcing classrooms to enable all students to communicate effectively.
- Providing students with the tools and opportunities to achieve their goals and experience success.
- Students achieving at their level of ability, gaining independence and learning to self-regulate.
- To ensure that our community feels welcome in our school and that their needs are recognised and supported.
- Making operational decisions which are informed by authentic, systemic data collection.
- Embed consistent and collaborative approach to whole school practices for learning and positive behaviour support.



Financial Statement

The Manager of Corporate Services (MCS) continued to manage the school budget with care and precision, ensuring full accountability for income and expenditure in line with Department of Education requirements.

A comprehensive finance report is prepared each term and presented to the School Board for review and approval.

Budget planning is led by curriculum area leaders, with submissions reviewed by the finance committee to ensure alignment with the school's priority areas and broader operational needs. All staff have access to whole-school plans and are well informed about focus areas, action plans, timelines and processes related to budget expenditure.

Prior to allocating cash budgets, significant consideration is given to human resourcing to ensure classrooms are staffed appropriately. Maintaining a 1:2 staff-to-student ratio remains a priority to support optimal student outcomes.

Substantial funding has been allocated to infrastructure and related projects to support the development of new classrooms and play spaces that accommodate ongoing growth and enhance the learning environment.

EXPENDITURE - Dec 2025 (Verified Dec Cash)

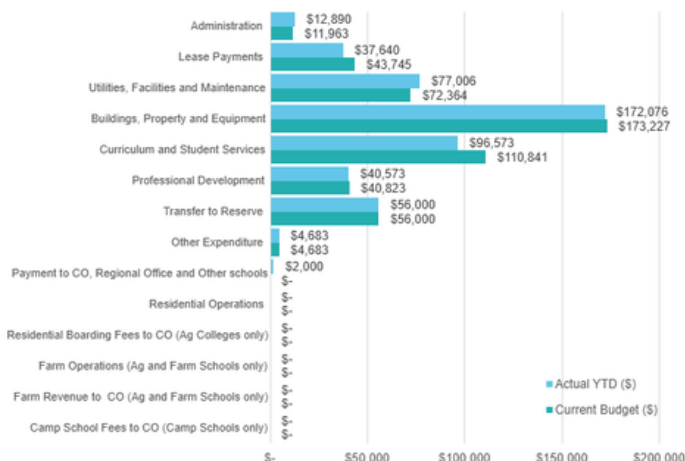
	Current Budget (\$)	Actual YTD (\$)
SALARIES		
Appointed Staff	5,045,338	5,045,338
New Appointments	0	0
Casual Payments	781,648	781,648
Other Salary Expenditure	22,135	22,135
Total Funds:	5,849,121	5,849,121
GOODS AND SERVICES (CASH EXPENDITURE)		
Administration	11,963	12,890
Lease Payments	43,745	37,640
Utilities, Facilities and Maintenance	72,364	77,006
Buildings, Property and Equipment	173,227	172,076
Curriculum and Student Services	110,841	96,573
Professional Development	40,823	40,573
Transfer to Reserve	56,000	56,000
Other Expenditure	4,683	4,683
Payment to CO, Regional Office and Other schools	0	2,000
Residential Operations	0	0
Residential Boarding Fees to CO (Ag Colleges only)	0	0
Farm Operations (Ag and Farm Schools only)	0	0
Farm Revenue to CO (Ag and Farm Schools only)	0	0
Camp School Fees to CO (Camp Schools only)	0	0
Total Funds:	513,646	499,441
TOTAL	6,362,767	6,348,562

ONE LINE BUDGET - Dec 2025 (Verified Dec Cash)		
	Current Budget (\$)	Actual YTD (\$)
Carry Forward (Cash):	141,923	141,923
Carry Forward (Salary):	13,635	13,635
INCOME		
Student-Centred Funding (including Transfers & Adjustments):	6,370,710	6,370,710
Locally Raised Funds:	31,900	36,731
Total Funds:	6,558,168	6,562,998
EXPENDITURE		
Salaries:	5,849,120	5,849,120
Goods and Services (Cash):	513,646	499,441
Total Expenditure:	6,362,766	6,348,562
VARIANCE:	195,401	214,436

INCOME - Dec 2025 (Verified Dec Cash)		
	Current Budget (\$)	Actual YTD (\$)
Carry Forward (Cash)	141,923	141,923
Carry Forward (Salary)	13,635	13,635
STUDENT-CENTRED FUNDING		
Per Student	855,750	855,750
School and Student Characteristics	5,287,511	5,287,511
Disability Adjustments	221,283	221,283
Targeted Initiatives	93,803	93,803
Operational Response Allocation	78,552	78,552
Total Funds:	6,514,899	6,514,899
TRANSFERS AND ADJUSTMENTS		
Regional Allocation	0	0
School Transfers - Salary	(422,040)	(422,040)
School Transfers - Cash	300,000	300,000
Department Adjustments	(22,149)	(22,149)
Total Funds:	(144,189)	(144,189)

LOCALLY RAISED FUNDS (REVENUE)		
	Current Budget (\$)	Actual YTD (\$)
Voluntary Contributions	2,397	2,357
Charges and Fees	12,078	13,571
Fees from Facilities Hire	0	0
Fundraising/Donations/Sponsorships	1,803	1,803
Commonwealth Govt Revenues	0	0
Other State Govt/Local Govt Revenues	0	0
Revenue from CO, Regional Office and Other scho	5,990	8,920
Other Revenues	9,632	10,080
Transfer from Reserve or DGR	0	0
Residential Accommodation	0	0
Farm Revenue (Ag and Farm Schools only)	0	0
Camp School Fees (Camp Schools only)	0	0
Total Funds:	31,900	36,731
TOTAL	6,558,168	6,562,999

Dec 2025 (Verified Dec Cash)





MERRIWA
PRIMARY SCHOOLS

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