

Belmay Primary School

Journeying Together

Prior to Joining Fogarty EDvance

Belmay Primary School in Cloverdale caters for over 200 students in Years K-6. Whilst teachers were working hard, with a wide variation in teaching practice across the school, student progress and achievement was limited. NAPLAN data was trending below 'like schools' and declining Year 5 achievement was particularly concerning.

Strategic Focus

The school sought to improve student achievement in NAPLAN to at or above 'like schools'. To achieve this change, Belmay's School Improvement Team focused on implementing an evidence-based, low variability teaching model.

Improvement Journey

Prior to implementing changes the team spent time researching whole-school programs and visiting other schools who had been on a similar journey.

A fundamental change was the establishment of Teacher and Learning Conversation groups (TLCs) based on ECE, Middle and Upper Primary clusters. TLCs met three times a term to discuss professional readings, engage in professional learning, and to review and input into the school's strategic planning documents. Time was also allocated for strategic planning updates during staff meetings and development days, to ensure all staff were regularly informed and updated on the progress of the change agenda.

To catalyse the change process, implementation and embedding of whole-school programs, supported by professional learning, were critical. Initially, following a research and consultation process *InitialLit* (PP to Year 2), and *Spelling Mastery* (Years 3 to 6) were rolled out across the school. All staff, including EAs, undertook PL to build a shared understanding of high impact instruction, to then apply across all literacy areas.

To support an increased focus on literacy blocks, timetable modifications were made, and staff given additional planning time to collaborate in their TLCs. A data tracking system was also implemented, resulting in increased accountability and targeted conversations around student learning to inform teaching practice.

"Belmay Primary School staff have always been committed to providing quality education for each child. The EDvance Program has given us the skills, tools, and confidence to continue to improve the quality of that education."

Sarah Durham, Principal

As part of the strategic execution, a carefully considered communication strategy around the change provided key stakeholders the ongoing narrative to the school improvement journey. The school leaders also deliberately enhanced the opportunities and quality of collaboration among staff to ensure that conversations were centered on improving student learning.

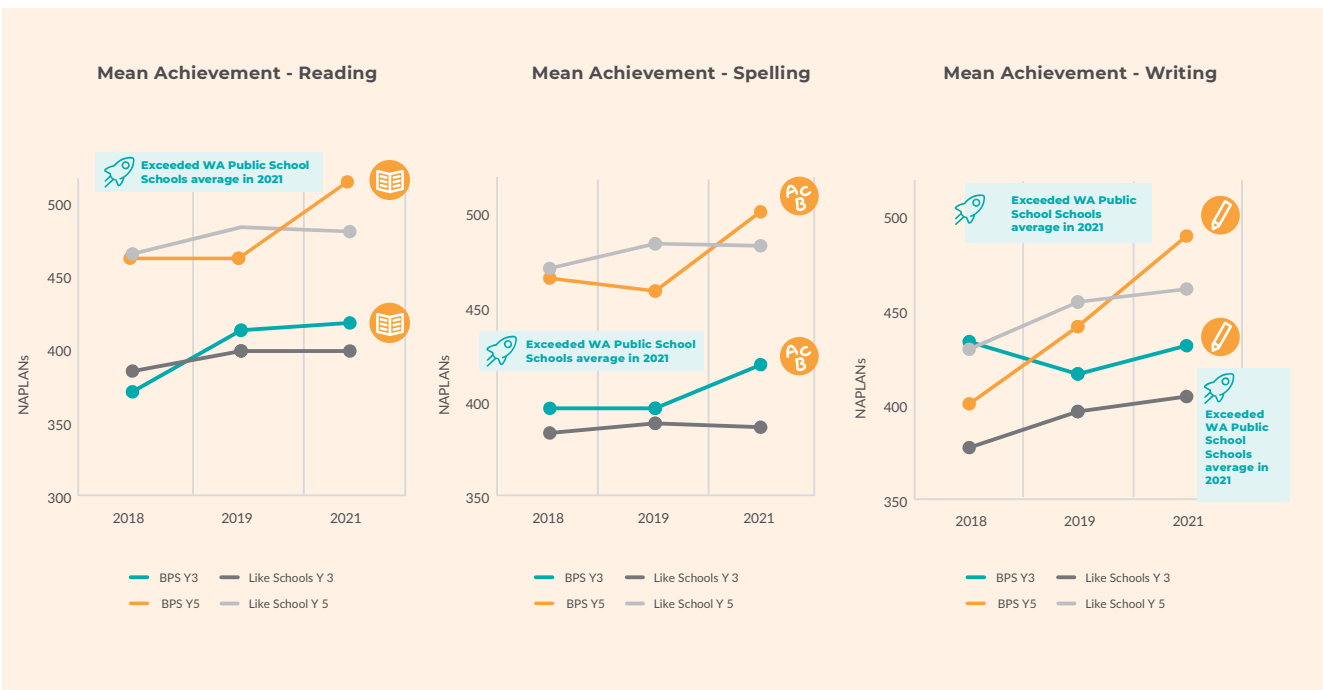
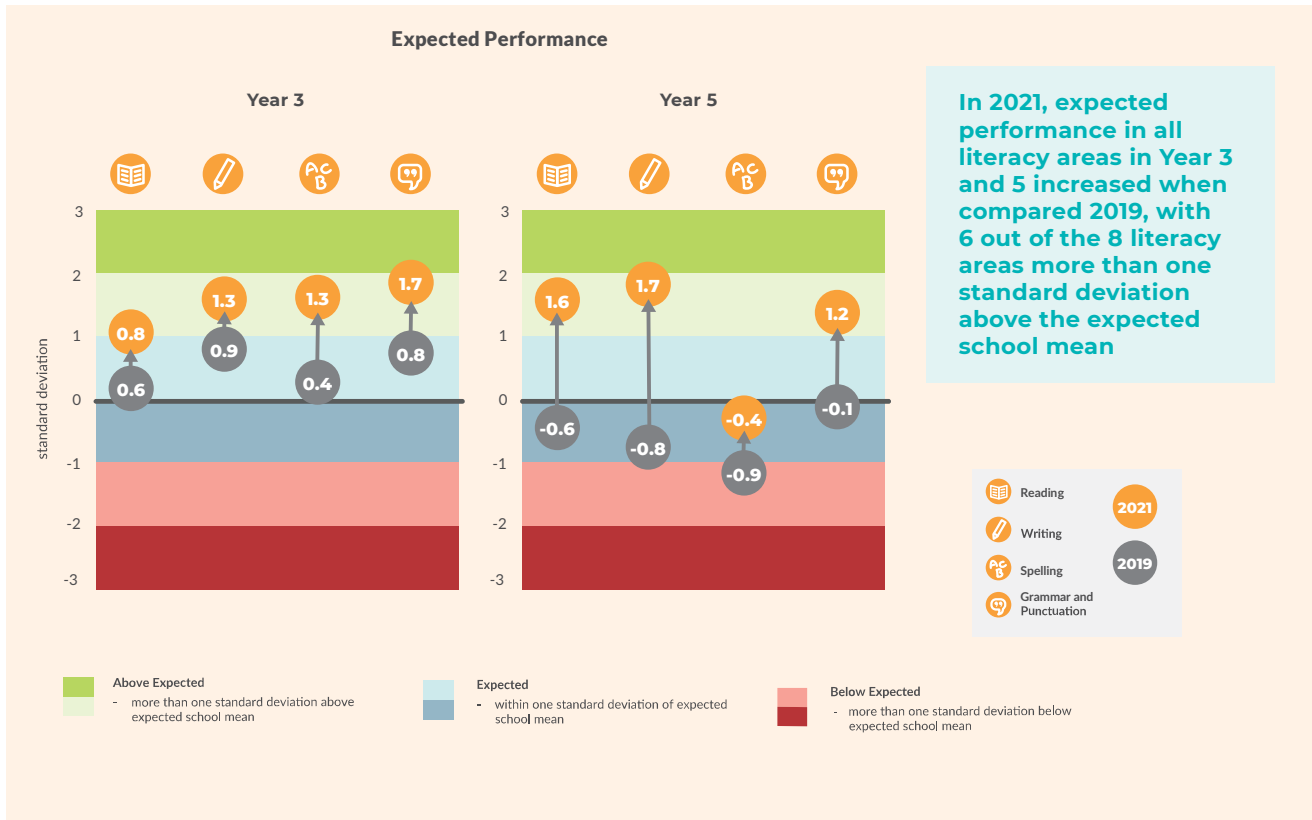
This sustained focus on aligning the work of the staff on school improvement efforts was reflected in significantly improved organisational health results.

By the second year in the program, Belmay moved from the bottom quartile to the top quartile of organisational health, which was sustained in 2021.



Impact

In 2021 students at Belmay Primary School were at or above expected performance in all NAPLAN domains for years 3 and 5. Achievement levels were 'above like schools' in all areas of literacy and numeracy.



Future Focus

With strong literacy programs now in place, the focus at Belmay PS will turn to improving student outcomes in numeracy. Planning for Mathematics daily reviews and automaticity schedules is underway.